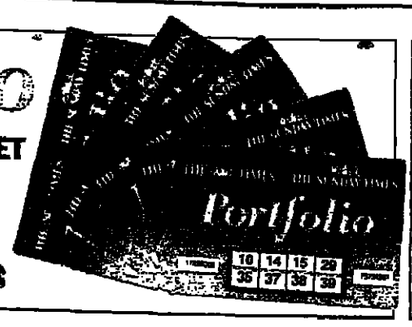
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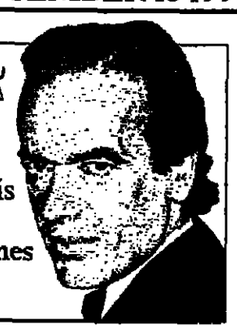
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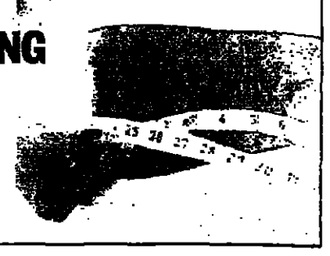
Why Martin Amis lacks heart, by Russell Celyn Jones

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THE PERIL OF SLIMMING PILLS

Dr Thomas Stuttaford

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40-PAGE DOUBLE SECTION

Alarm over fall in convictions

Rape victims may get new deal in court

BY STEWART TENDLER AND RICHARD FORD

RAPE victims may be allowed to give evidence from behind screens and be spared prurient cross-examination as part of a drive to bring more sex attackers to justice.

Police, MPs and women's groups are all pressing the Home Secretary to act after figures released yesterday showed that far more women are being raped, but far fewer men are being tried or convicted.

The number of rapes reported to police has trebled over the past 12 years to just under 6,000 in 1996 — and some officers say that is a massive underestimate, with only one in ten victims thought to come forward. But the number of prosecutions and convictions has fallen, so that only 19 per cent of complaints lead to a court case — and only half of those end with a conviction.

More than one hundred MPs, many of them Labour backbenchers, have now signed a Commons motion calling for sweeping changes to court procedures and Jack Straw has promised to consider reforms.

He said yesterday that he was extremely concerned by the figures, which indicated that the sea-change in the way police investigated rape complaints had not been fully reflected by the courts or the legal profession.

"There is a great deal to do to make the system better and more sensitive to the needs of the victim. More needs to be done to protect witnesses in court. We have to get away from the hostile environment. Victims have already suffered one trial with the rape itself."

Mr Straw said that screening victims from their alleged attackers was one possibility. Another was to curtail the often lengthy cross-examination of victims about their previous sexual history: the Home Secretary wants to ensure that such questioning is allowed only if strictly relevant.

Two studies are already underway in an attempt to tackle the problem. The Home office is following more than 500 cases from the first complaint to the court case in an effort raise the standard of evidence against suspects and improve the environment for victims and other vulnerable witnesses.

At the same time, the police, the Crown Prosecution Service and the judiciary are examining how the present system operates and how various departments co-operate.

Nigel Pascoe, QC, chairman of the Bar's public affairs committee, said he backed an overhaul of the rape laws — including screens to surround victims or allowing them to give evidence by video link — so long as they still allowed vigorous cross-examination. "Times have changed. Today we extend much greater protection to victims of sexual assault," he said.

But any such changes are likely to prove controversial with civil liberties groups, which argue that allowing screens around a victim giving evidence is a further erosion of a fundamental part of the legal process.

John Wadham, director of Liberty, the civil rights pressure group, said: "The difficulty with this is where are we going to draw the line. There may be a number of steps that need to be taken to protect vulnerable witnesses, but there is a fundamental right of trial in the open where the defendant can confront his or her accuser. That should not be given away lightly."

The case for reform was presented vividly yesterday by a victim who waived her anonymity to address the Police Superintendents' Association conference in Bristol.

Sinita Vig, who was left pregnant after being attacked by a family friend, asked why the courts "cannot be civilised to someone who has been through the most terrible experience of their lives. I felt I was on trial."

After she spoke, the association overwhelmingly backed a motion calling for radical reform to help rape victims in court, and to stop serial date-rapists walking free. One detective told the conference that Scotland Yard knew of up to ten such men preying on women in London. Detective Superintendent Bill Graham-slaw said that they befriended women in bars and clubs with a premeditated view to rape confident that they would never be convicted. "I know of a handful of these date-rapists who offend over and over again."



Shirley Wigginton: forced to booby-trap her home against former boyfriend

Princess's car may have hit Fiat before fatal crash

BY BEN MACINTYRE IN PARIS AND ALAN HAMILTON

THE Mercedes in which Diana, Princess of Wales, made her final journey may have hit another car before crashing into a concrete pillar in a Paris tunnel, French police said yesterday.

Fragments of the plastic brake light from a Fiat Uno have been found close to pieces of the Mercedes's headlamp and wing mirror within a hundred yards of the crash site. Scientists also believe that a scratch along the limousine's right wing may have been caused by an earlier collision.

A number of unidentified witnesses have told police that they saw a second car driving through the tunnel which sped away after the crash that killed the Princess, her friend Dodi Fayed and their driver Henri Paul. But police still believe that there is only a "slim possibility" that another vehicle was involved, and it seems strange that a small car hit with enough force to shatter lights on both cars was able to continue its journey while the Mercedes spun out of control.

The Fiat shards found in the tunnel may have been the remnants of an unconnected accident. But that would not explain the presence of the glass from the Mercedes headlamp so far ahead of the pillar.

The debris is being examined in a laboratory which should be able to establish the exact make, model, colour, year and place of production of the cars from which they came. That could, however, take weeks and in the meantime, police hope to learn more from the bodyguard who survived the crash.

Trevor Rees-Jones took his first steps since the accident yesterday and he is expected to be interviewed by the investigating magistrate Hervé Stéphan tomorrow.

☐ The Queen is to take the Princess's place at a London concert that was intended as a gala but will now become a memorial event.

Buckingham Palace said that the Queen had been delighted to accept the invitation to be guest of honour at the Festival Hall on November 12 for an event to mark the 175th anniversary of the Royal Academy of Music and raise funds for Great Ormond Street Hospital for Children.

The Queen is patron of both institutions and the Princess was president of both — although she relinquished her position with the academy after her divorce, when she gave up about a hundred charity posts.

Sir Colin Davis will conduct a programme of Mozart that has been changed to reflect the memorial nature of the concert.

A violin concerto and the Symphony No 36 have been dropped in favour of his Requiem, but the Sinfonia Concertante and Kyrie remain.

Palace officials dismissed any suggestion that the Queen's attendance was part of an effort to heal supposed rifts between with her former daughter-in-law, but it will be seen as a gesture of solidarity.

☐ Earl Spencer had a 30-minute meeting with the Prime Minister at Downing Street yesterday. No details were released, but it is assumed that he used the occasion to renew his call for a new privacy law.

Editors' pledge

Senior newspaper editors promised at a meeting of the Press Complaints Commission's code committee to support rigorous privacy reforms and to help to put an end to the "deplorable practices" by some members of the press after the Princess's death..... Page 5

Clinton rejects landmine treaty

BY OUR FOREIGN STAFF

WASHINGTON yesterday refused to sign a treaty banning landmines. A draft version had been approved in Oslo earlier in the day.

Defending the decision, President Clinton said America could not sign an agreement that failed to accept the special responsibilities of the world's only superpower. "Unfortunately, as it is drafted, I cannot in good conscience add America's name," he said.

The sticking point for Washington is Korea. With only 37,000 Americans supporting South Korean troops against hundreds of thousands of North Korean forces across the border, the President argued that America was justified in keeping anti-tank and anti-personnel mines in the peninsula.

America wants a nine-year exemption from the treaty for Korea. It also wants states to be allowed to withdraw from the treaty if they are attacked.

Robin Cook last night welcomed the accord, describing it as the beginning of the end for landmines. "This achievement is due in part to the work of Diana, Princess of Wales, who did so much to focus the attention of the world on the horrific effects of anti-personnel landmines," the Foreign Secretary said. Britain would continue to urge as many countries as possible to sign the treaty, he added.

Global ban, page 16

Job figures raise interest rate fear

Financial markets are braced for further interest rate rises after statistics showed unemployment at a 17-year low and the high street spending boom continuing.

Unemployment fell to 1,496,500 — 5.3 per cent of the workforce — in August, the lowest since 1980. Retail sales rose 0.4 per cent, the same rate as in July, although the annual rate slipped from 6.7 per cent to a still robust 5.6 per cent ..... Pages 23, 27

Unionists revive peace process

Ulster Unionists revived the peace process by returning to Stormont for the first time since Sinn Fein was admitted to the talks.

Declaring that republican terrorists would not drive his Ulster Unionist Party from the process, David Trimble broke one of unionism's taboos by marching his delegation into the same building as Sinn Fein's Gerry Adams and Martin McGuinness .. Page 2

Rejected lover in military stake-out

BY STEPHEN FARRELL

A FORMER Army engineer waged a stalking campaign against his former girlfriend, using his military skills to bug her telephone and stake out her home.

Peter Payne, 43, eavesdropped on Shirley Wigginton with microphones in her bedroom and kitchen and logged all her movements in a diary.

He always vanished before police arrived by monitoring her 999 calls with a hand-held receiver while sitting in his car outside her house in Hucknall, Nottinghamshire.

Mrs Wigginton, 42, was forced to booby-trap and barricade herself in her own home during the four-month ordeal, and is still undergoing counselling more than a year later.

Payne, 43, was yesterday sentenced to two years in jail suspended for two years and ordered to pay £200 compensation at Nottingham Crown Court after he admitted causing actual bodily harm between March and June last year. Judge Alistair McDuff, QC, described his conduct as "wicked and threatening", but said he suspended the sentence because Payne had moved out of the area and changed his behaviour.

The sentence was last night attacked by Mrs Wigginton, a widow and mother of two children. She said: "It's like he has been allowed to walk away. He's probably laughing about it. Despite everything he's done to me, he hasn't had to pay for any of it. I still break down and get depressed."

The court heard the couple came together after her husband died, and they bought a house together. However, the relationship soured because of Payne's violent temper and by February 1996 she had obtained two injunctions and a county court order to remove him. He finally left but began to stake out the house, threatening her children and running through the back garden wearing a balaclava mask.

Last night Mrs Wigginton, who has only recently stopped taking tranquilisers, told how she was so scared that she asked a close friend to move in with her.

They turned the home into a virtual fortress, barricading themselves in at night with saucepans balanced on top of the ironing board against the back door.

A charge of burglary at Mrs Wigginton's home was ordered to lie on the file.

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Paxman denounces 'sausage machine' BBC news



"The BBC always does the best dramas"

BY RAYMOND SNODDY AND CAROL MIDGLEY

LEADING BBC presenters yesterday added their weight to editors, producers and journalists in opposing plans to abolish individual editorships for news programmes. Jeremy Paxman, the Newsnight presenter (now on leave to write a book), said yesterday that the plan to create centralised news teams would turn the BBC News operation into a "sausage machine".

All producers and presenters of Radio 4's flagship Today programme, including Anna Ford, John Humphrys, James Naughtie, Sue MacGregor and Nick Clarke, presenter of the World at One, plus Robin Lustig and James Cox have signed a letter describing the changes as "unacceptable".

The letter will go to Richard Clemmow, head of BBC news programmes who announced the changes to staff on Tuesday — changes that will see four executive editors take over responsibility for blocks of news programming. Associate editors will have responsibilities for a number of individual programmes and a fifth executive editor will have responsibility for commissioning features across the entire radio and television news output. The feature commissioner's budget will come from the individual programmes.

Austin Mitchell, the Labour MP and broadcaster said last night the changes were "a dog's dinner" and "further Birtian insanity". He was referring to John Birt the BBC Director-General.

"This is putting all news into the Birtian Kenwood mixer. The Nine O'Clock News will simply be a rehashed version of the 24-hour television news rather than the other way around."

Mr Mitchell said last night he plans to raise the issue in Parliament, and write to both the BBC Governors and Chris Smith, the Culture, Media and Sports Secretary.

A former senior member of the BBC board of management, who asked not to be named, said yesterday that the plan meant the BBC would be "producing news like extrude plastic. You just break off a bit."

One senior editor who has decided not to apply for one of the new executive editor posts said yesterday that he had seen BBC financial projections showing that in between two and three years the amount of

Continued on page 2, col 6

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Lib Dems hail 'deal on PR'

An era of closer co-operation between Labour and the Lib Dems began, says

Jill Sherman

SIMON WALKER



The Prime Minister with Paddy Ashdown and colleagues at the first meeting of the new Cabinet committee, at Downing Street yesterday

THE Liberal Democrats claimed last night that they had reached agreement with Labour to press ahead with the first steps towards proportional representation for electing Westminster MPs.

After yesterday's historic meeting of the new Cabinet committee which includes Liberal Democrats as well as Labour ministers, sources close to Paddy Ashdown said the party was now confident that the commission to look at electoral reform would be set up this autumn. There had been concern that the Prime Minister, who is personally against proportional representation, would renege on an agreement made before the election between Robin Cook and Robert Maclennan, the Liberal Democrat president, to set up the commission. Labour's manifesto also commits the party to holding a referendum on electoral reform before the end of this Parliament, although there has been speculation that this might be delayed or dropped.

But last night a senior Liberal Democrat source said: "The commission will be set up this autumn. We have made progess and the Cook/Maclennan agreement is on track."

Mr Maclennan said: "It was a good meeting. I think it bodes well for the constructive implementation of the proposals in our report agreed before the election."

However, Downing Street later played down the significance of the move, claiming that it had already agreed to set up the commission but no timetable had been set and no chairman had been appointed. The new committee, comprising five senior Liberal Democrats, including Mr Ashdown and six ministers including Tony Blair, marks the strongest alliance between the two parties since the Lib-Lab pact of the 1970s.

It paves the way for an era of closer co-operation during this Parliament while falling short of any formal coalition. Last week Mr Ashdown, the Liberal Democrat leader, annoyed some in his party by suggesting that it would have formed a coalition with Labour had the general election produced a hung parliament or a small Labour majority. Last night sources close to Mr Ashdown emphasised that the party still intended to make "constructive criticism" of Labour where there was disagreement.

The 90-minute meeting at Downing Street, chaired by the Prime Minister, focused on constitutional reform and was described as "friendly, positive and workmanlike" by both sides. The two parties also agreed to co-operate in pushing through legislation to follow the referendum campaigns in Scotland and Wales.

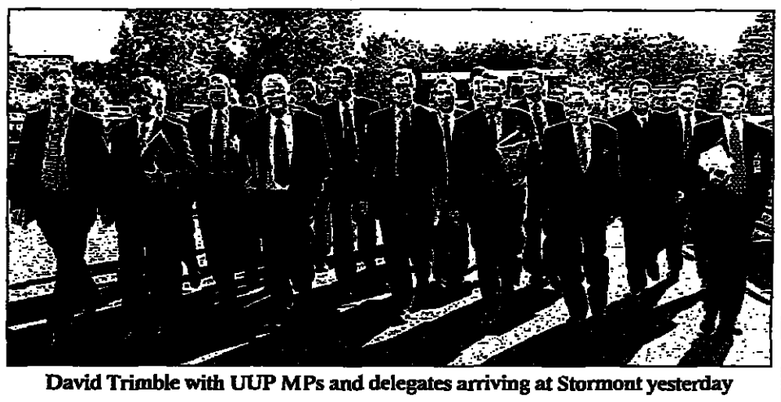
Robin Cook, the Foreign Secretary and a proponent of PR, said: "The attitude and atmosphere was down-to-earth; a working relationship. We're going to make Britain a fair, open, modern democracy and today's meeting was a step in that direction."

Mr Ashdown said: "This is about opening a new path to a more co-operative style of politics." The Cabinet committee is expected to meet once every two months, but the members agreed to meet each other informally when appropriate.

At the Liberal Democrat conference, which starts this weekend, activists opposed to closer links with Labour are expected to voice concern.

Ulster talks revived with return of Unionists

BY MARTIN FLETCHER, CHIEF IRELAND CORRESPONDENT



David Trimble with UUP MPs and delegates arriving at Stormont yesterday

ULSTER Unionists revived Northern Ireland's peace process yesterday by returning to Stormont for the first time since Sinn Fein was admitted to the multiparty talks.

David Trimble, in declaring that republican terrorists would not drive his Ulster Unionist Party from the process, broke one of Unionism's oldest taboos by marching his delegation into the same building as Gerry Adams, Martin McGuinness and other Sinn Fein delegates.

Mr Trimble, speaking a day after the Markethill bomb, said that the UUP had come to confront, not negotiate with, Sinn Fein and would be demanding its expulsion after Tuesday's bombing and the IRA's disavowal last week of the Mitchell principles of democracy and non-violence.

He refused to say if or when his party would sit in the same room as the IRA's political representatives, but other political leaders had no doubt that the UUP's return was a prelude to the first full-scale, round-table negotiations involving Unionists and republicans since Ireland's partition in 1921. At the very least, the UUP will have to face Sinn Fein to argue its case for its expulsion. A plenary session on that issue is expected within a fortnight.

Mo Mowlam, the Northern Ireland Secretary, praised Mr Trimble's "courageous" decision to return to Stormont. Ray Burke, the Irish Foreign Minister, said the unprecedented presence of the UUP and Sinn Fein under the same roof was hugely significant.

The UUP planned a theatrical 10am arrival at Stormont for the media's benefit, but Sinn Fein managed to get its own 16-member delegation there first. As Mr Trimble's team was forced to linger outside the gates, Mr Adams held forth, expressing the hope that the UUP would now stop its "play-acting" and "get down to the serious business of making peace".

Then it was the UUP's turn. Flanked by fellow MPs and leaders of the loyalist Ulster Democratic and Progressive Unionist parties, Mr Trimble marched a small army of aides up the driveway to a battery of microphones. The UUP had returned to defend the Union, he said. "With the Ulster Unionists at the table there will be no united Ireland. There will be no joint sovereignty ... There will be no agreement coming out of these talks which is not clearly a United Kingdom solution."

The UUP had no illusions about the character of Sinn Fein, he said. "We have not invited them to the table. But we are not afraid of them. We will not run away from them. We are not there to negotiate with them, but to confront them — to expose their fascist character." Mr Trimble also condemned Ian Paisley's Democratic Unionist Party for boycotting the talks and accusing the UUP of conniving in the Union's destruction. "Those that walk out leave the Union undefended," he said. "They surrender the defence of the Union, leaving it to the tender mercies of the British and Irish Governments."

David Ervine, the Progressive Unionist Party leader, said there was now a chance to exorcise the ghosts of an ancient quarrel: "Let the debate begin. We are ready."

Inside, the Unionist and Sinn Fein delegations have offices on different floors and the only place they might meet unintentionally is in the canteen.

Paxman hits out

Continued from page 1

money available to BBC television news programmes will be superceded by the money going to continuous news plus an emergency fund available to Tony Hall, chief executive of BBC News. *Radio 5 Live*, the 24-hour news and sport network, would have more money than Radio 4 within two years.

Journalists are increasingly concerned that existing programmes are going to be damaged in order to pay for a 24-hour television news service on digital which may not be available to many people for years.

An emergency meeting of the National Union of Journalists was being held for an estimated 120 BBC members at Broadcasting House last night and another was planned for today.

Many senior editors including Peter Horrocks, editor of *Newsnight*, John Barton, editor of *Today* and Kevin Marsh editor of *The World at One*, have pledged not to apply for any "super editor" jobs.

Mr Clemmow and his deputy Steve Mitchell yesterday faced staff from both *Today* and *The World at One* and ran into a wall of opposition to the plans. There were "lots of raised voices, lots of fury and even more cursing," said one of those there. Another said: "There were about 80 people in the room and the only two people who thought it a good idea were Richard Clemmow and his sidekick Steve Mitchell."

It is believed that James Boyle, the Radio 4 controller, was not consulted about the changes. "He was not consulted about this even if he says he was. He is bloody angry yet he is having to publicly defend it," said one BBC journalist.

Proposals to ease beef ban approved

FROM CHARLES BREMNER IN BRUSSELS

EUROPEAN scientists yesterday approved British proposals for a partial easing of the worldwide ban on beef exports, clearing the way to a possible European Union decision by the end of the year.

The scientific veterinary committee broadly accepted a scheme to allow the export of beef from herds that are certified to have been free of BSE for eight years provided they are subject to a stringent computerised tracing system. This condition effectively limits any easing to cattle from Northern Ireland, the only region with such a system.

The scientists' opinion allows the Commission to start the process that could lead to member states agreeing to start easing the ban, which was imposed in March 1996.

British officials were guarded about the prospects of an eventual easing of the embargo. With emotion still running high on the Continent against any readmission of British beef to shops on the European mainland, the consent of the rest of the EU could still be hard to win. "This is about the first of six steps along the way to getting the ban lifted," a British official said. The next step is for the Commission to produce a proposal and seek the opinion of the committee of national veterinary representatives.

The Government was last night reviewing the committee's opinion before deciding how to act. One option was now to make a formal request to the Commission to have the ban eased, officials said.

The committee's decision does however amount to the first positive EU action over British beef since the Commission forced through a decision in mid-1996 to allow the export of gelatine, a move that was later suspended. The Florence agreement, struck in June 1996 after John Major's campaign of non-cooperation, stipulates that the ban can be progessively eased once Britain satisfies purely scientific conditions.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Hague takes blame for attack on Blair

William Hague told the Shadow Cabinet last night that he took full responsibility for his strongly criticised attack on Tony Blair for allegedly making political capital from the death of Diana, Princess of Wales. Mr Hague, whom many Conservative politicians believe was let down by his advisers, told his leading frontbenchers, meeting for the first time for six weeks, that no blame should be attached to anybody else.

Mr Hague was clearly defending his friend and chief adviser, Alan Duncan, who has been criticised by many Tory politicians, including members of the Shadow Cabinet, for allegedly inspiring the attack on Mr Blair by Mr Hague in an interview with Sir David Frost on Sunday. According to Tory sources, there had been no mention of Mr Duncan during the meeting. But it was acknowledged afterwards that Mr Duncan's role of day-to-day briefing of the press would end when Gregor Mackay was appointed shortly as Mr Hague's personal press secretary. Mr Duncan will retain an important advisory position in Mr Hague's office.

Services to keep war role

The Armed Forces will be allowed to retain the ability to take part in "high-intensity" warfare under the Government's long-term review of defence, George Robertson, Defence Secretary, is to announce today. Although Britain can no longer act as a world policeman, it will continue to "make a difference" and the three Services will not be confined to peacekeeping operations, he will say at the Royal United Services Institute in London. His remarks are likely to be welcomed by the military, which has resisted proposals to turn it into a peacekeeping militia.

Govan inquiry renewed

Police have been asked by the Procurator Fiscal in Glasgow to make further inquiries into claims of wrongdoing in the Govan constituency of the Labour MP Mohammed Sarwar. A report into allegations of bribery was submitted by police last month. A spokesman for the Procurator Fiscal said the request for more information was routine and simply formed part of a continuing inquiry. Mr Sarwar, who has not yet been questioned by officers, has fiercely denied claims and said he was confident that the police report would clear his name.

Boys, 12, accused of rape

A 12-year-old boy appeared in court accused of the rape of his five-year-old niece in the Harehills area of Leeds on Sunday. Another boy of 12 was also charged. Both boys were remanded into local authority care by a youth court panel sitting at Leeds. The case was adjourned for a week. The girl was being looked after by Leeds social services staff after earlier being made the subject of a protection order.

Rail complaints rise

Complaints by rail passengers to a watchdog group have risen sharply. Figures released yesterday show a 55.8 per cent increase in letters to the Rail Users Consultative Committee, which deals with complaints when passengers are dissatisfied with the response they received from a rail company. There were 2,799 complaints from April to June, when all 25 train operators were in private hands.

Flu plea by doctors

Doctors are urging people with a cold or sore throat this winter to treat themselves rather than see their GP. Last year a third of adults claimed to have flu, of whom a third saw their doctors, leading to more than four million consultations. GPs said that help should be sought only if severe symptoms developed. The Royal College of Nursing advised old people not to be deterred from seeking help.

Hotel for tiny tots opens

A hotel catering solely for children under five where room service can provide a bedtime story or change a nappy is to open in London for the well-heeled parent who has to work late or travel on business. The young guests can stay for a night, a weekend or a week in the care of 20 nursery nurses and entertainers. A day and night at the Hopes and Dreams nursery in Islington costs about £100.

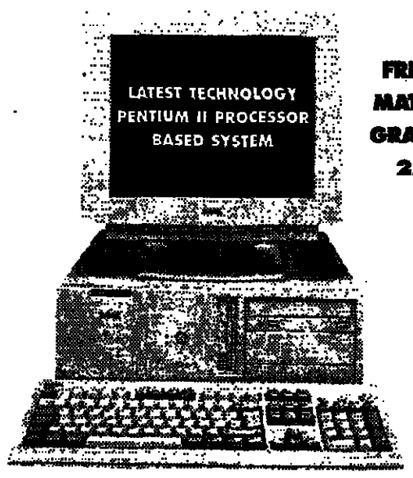
Gold bars go duty free

Miniature gold bars, known as biscuits, have gone on sale as duty-free goods at London's main airports. The 3.75oz bars, which measure 46mm by 25mm by 6mm, are being offered for about £130 less than the going rate of £793.69. They are expected to prove particularly attractive to Indian and Pakistani travellers who often use gold as currency. The gold is being sold VAT-free by Travelex.

Waxworks on the wane

Bart Simpson and Stalin are among 60 life-size waxwork models and props to be auctioned at a Phillips sale in York next month. They come from the city's Friargate wax museum, opened in 1983, which is closing after the recent death of one of its founders. A limited edition of the Domesday Book is expected to fetch up to £2,500, with Bart estimated at £300-£500 and Stalin at £700-£1,000.

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'Greedy' Sugar forced me out, says Venables

BY MICHAEL HORSNELL

TERRY VENABLES, the former England football coach, told a jury yesterday that he was driven out of Tottenham Hotspur by the lies and greed of his partner, Alan Sugar, chairman of the North London club.

Mr Venables said that he then lost his England job because events had made the international committee nervous of retaining him.

After the 1991 takeover by the two men of the club, which had debts of £16 million, profits of £3 million and £5 million were made in the next two years.

After that Mr Sugar, the Amstrad tycoon, decided he wanted it all to himself, Mr Venables said. Describing the collapse of their relationship which led to his departure in 1993, Mr Venables told Knightsbridge Crown Court: "He just got big eyes, got greedy and wanted the lot."

Mr Venables, who became chief executive of Spurs after the takeover, was giving evidence on behalf of his business associate, Edward Ashby, who is accused of serving the club as a £17,000-a-year general manager while an undischarged bankrupt.

In an action brought by the Department of Trade and Industry, Mr Ashby, 53, denies four counts of being involved in managing the club, two of its subsidiary companies and the London nightclub Scribes West, owned by Mr Venables.

The prosecution maintains that he hired and fired staff and was involved in management decisions, but Mr Ashby claims that he was merely Mr Venables's "glorified secretary".

Mr Venables said that Mr Ashby was only ever an assistant and that he did not know that Spurs notepaper bore the title "general manager" in letters written by Mr Ashby. "I ran the show myself," he said.

Mr Venables also denied knowing that Mr Ashby was responsible for preparing a business plan for the club in 1991 presented to the board after the takeover. The case continues today.



Midge Mather outside yesterday's hearing. She told the police: "I want to go to court. I wasn't flogging my guts out for two hours and a half hours for nothing"

The ringing confession

Angry villager, 64, sabotaged church bells then telephoned police and councillors to say that she did it. **Simon de Bruxelles** reports

THERE was no doubt about the culprit when someone broke down the heavy oak door of a 12th-century village church and cut the bell ropes with a hacksaw. Midge Mather, 65, personally telephoned every member of the parochial church council to tell them what she had done, and then called the police.

Tired of the noise from the bells of St Swithin's in Compton Bassett, Wiltshire, she wanted everyone to know of her protest, and even offered to leave a light switched on outside her cottage so that police could find their way to arrest her. She was disappointed when officers said that initially they would just make a report.

"But look, I want to go to court," she told them. "Come off it. I wasn't flogging my guts out for two hours and a half hours for nothing."

A tape recording of the telephone call was played yesterday as Mrs Mather had her wish, appearing before Chippenham magistrates accused of causing criminal damage worth £1,852.25 to the 500-year-old door and six bell ropes. She is defending herself, claiming that she acted under duress and had no choice because the noise was placing the life of her brother, John, in danger.

She had broken down the door with a crowbar, clambered on a box balanced on a chair and cut the bell ropes with a hacksaw. In her phone call, she said: "Is that the police? My name is Mrs Mather and I think you ought to come out and arrest me. I have just cut the bells at my church and smashed the door down. I will put the outside light on so you can find me. I've asked for meetings and meetings and I've got nothing.

"The only thing I could was take it into my hands. My brother is ill from those bells. My brother could have done it himself but of course it would have killed him. He was blown up on D-Day, he was a commando.

"I had to clamber over the door. One time I got stuck because I'm a bit fat, but I managed it in the end. I've been up and cut six ropes. I've had to stand on a box at 64 years of age, wobbling like hell, but I managed it."

Mrs Mather arrived at court wearing a black pillbox and veil, and carrying a 5ft tubular building prop wrapped in a red gingham tea towel. The pole was identical to one used to block the door to the belltower after Mrs Mather had threatened to sabotage a visit by a group of campanologists from Oxfordshire.

Guy Knell, for the prosecution, said that until Mrs Mather began complaining several years ago, groups from all over the country would come to ring them. The number of visits was cut and efforts were made to warn her in advance of bellringing sessions.

He said: "The church authorities have done their best to try to accommodate Mrs Mather over the bellringing. They are people normally used to dealing in terms of peace and understanding. There have been times when Mrs Mather's rather confrontational approach has left them rather nonplussed." Mrs Mather said that she had never been invited to discuss the problem with the church council despite numerous complaints, and had not been informed the ringing was being cut back. But John Reis, secretary of the church council, said the reason no one had told her was because "unfortunately your calls were long and ranting and it was impossible for the recipient to get a word in edgeways".

Dr David Bishop, captain of the bells, said he arranged for the steel bar to be placed behind the belfry door after she had made threats in the local newspaper. The ropes were tied out of reach and the safety rope to the stairs was removed. Mrs Mather asked him whether it had been his intention that "I should fall and break my neck". Dr Bishop, a GP, replied: "The intention was to stop you going up in the first place."

The hearing threatened to descend into farce when George Calvert, an elderly war veteran and former judge's clerk helping Mrs Mather with her case, muttered to a witness: "You are arrogant, sir."

After being admonished by the magistrate, he said: "I won't be intimidated by anyone" and resigned as legal adviser, to be replaced by Mrs Mather's daughter, Rebekah Sloane-Mather. Mr Calvert was later taken into custody after shouting at the magistrate, who had told Mrs Mather to sit down when she complained that she was not being allowed to summon several witnesses, including the Bishop of Salisbury.

The case continues today.

JP who exposed bottom loses her seat

BY FRANCES GIBB
LEGAL CORRESPONDENT

A MAGISTRATE who was photographed exposing her bottom has been told by the Lord Chancellor that she may no longer sit on the bench. Josie Lewis has been told that her "mooning" failed to uphold "the dignity, standing and good reputation" of the magistracy.

Her dismissal from the Swindon Bench comes after an incident in April when she bared her backside at Brian Woodfield, a stable owner. Miss Lewis, 45, had been collecting some property from the stables at Wootton Bassett, Wiltshire, when she became involved in an argument with Mr Woodfield and dropped her breeches at him as she left.

He already had his camera out to take pictures of the tackle she was removing as she had not signed an inventory, and got a photograph of her bottom. She has now been sent a letter by Lord Irvine of Lairg, the Lord Chancellor, telling her that she can no longer sit as a Justice of the Peace.

Miss Lewis, a freelance publicist and journalist, said: "My future work commitments would not have left me available to sit anyway. There are other ways I can help in the community. I have never met anybody who has ever condemned me for it. They have all treated it as quite light-hearted. I do not see any reason why I should have resigned. If the Lord Chancellor has made this decision, then there's nothing I can do."

Mr Woodfield said: "I think it's for the best. She should have resigned long ago. It's not fitting for someone who can send people to jail to act in such a manner. I'm sure if she had sat on a case where someone had mooned she would have taken a very dim view."

Honeymoon couple survive balloon crash in Mexico

BY PHILIP DELVES BROUGHTON

A BRITISH couple on honeymoon in Mexico survived after they fell 2,500ft when a hot air balloon they were travelling in ripped open and caught fire.

David and Vicky Martin booked up just minutes after lifting off from the resort of Puerto Vallarta to see the balloon tearing open above them and then bursting into flames. The six passengers and pilot dropped to the ground at a speed of more than 40mph.

"Everbody was laughing and joking as we got up in the air, saying 'We must be mad doing this'," Mr Martin, 30, from Sutton in Ashfield, Nottinghamshire, said. "Then I looked up and saw the balloon had ripped all the way around about halfway up and I could see the sky through the hole.

"The pilot had told us because the balloon was patchwork it was not supposed to rip. I just thought 'Oh my God we are going to die, this can't be happening.'"

The balloon caught fire and the passengers, all honeymoon couples, were told to crouch down to avoid being burnt. Mr Martin said: "It was the hardest thing in the world not being able to hold my wife's hand while all this was happening. Every time I close my eyes now I see the ground coming up towards me. Vicky said to me 'We're going to die, aren't we.'"



David and Vicky Martin on their wedding day

As they hit the ground he and the other passengers crawled clear of the wreckage and he heard his wife crying out that she could not move her legs. He said: "She thought she had broken her back and asked me if I would still love her if she was in a wheelchair for the rest of her life."

The pilot then shouted to Mr Martin to pull his wife clear as the balloon's fuel tanks could explode at any minute. "We pulled her out between us. She was in so much pain that she was screaming."

Mrs Martin, 29, had a four-hour operation for a badly disjointed spine while Mr Martin, 30, escaped with just a swollen ankle. Poor standards of nursing in the Mexican hospital to which they were transported meant a further 12 days were added to their stay. Mr Martin had to feed and wash his wife himself. The other passengers and the pilot were unhurt. Mrs Martin's surgeons told her that her survival was amazing.

The accident took place ten days into the couple's two-week stay when they decided to take an excursion organised with two other honeymooning couples.

Since returning to England, the couple have been treated at the King's Mill Hospital in Sutton in Ashfield where they both work, Mr Martin as an accountant and Mrs Martin as a clerical assistant.

Mr Martin said: "We have hardly had a chance to think about the wedding. It seems like a lifetime ago. We feel lucky to be alive. Vicky is still upset about the whole thing, but I have told her that at least one thing has come out of all of this: there is now a bond between us that no one can break."

Mexican authorities are investigating the accident. The balloon in which the Martins were flying was only a few weeks old and had been given a safety check. The pilot had been flying balloons for 18 years.

David and Vicky Martin booked their holiday to Puerto Vallarta through the First Choice travel firm. They were fully insured through their own company.

Balloon trips at Puerto Vallarta have been temporarily suspended by First Choice until they find what caused the Martins' balloon to break up.

Left-handers from outer space

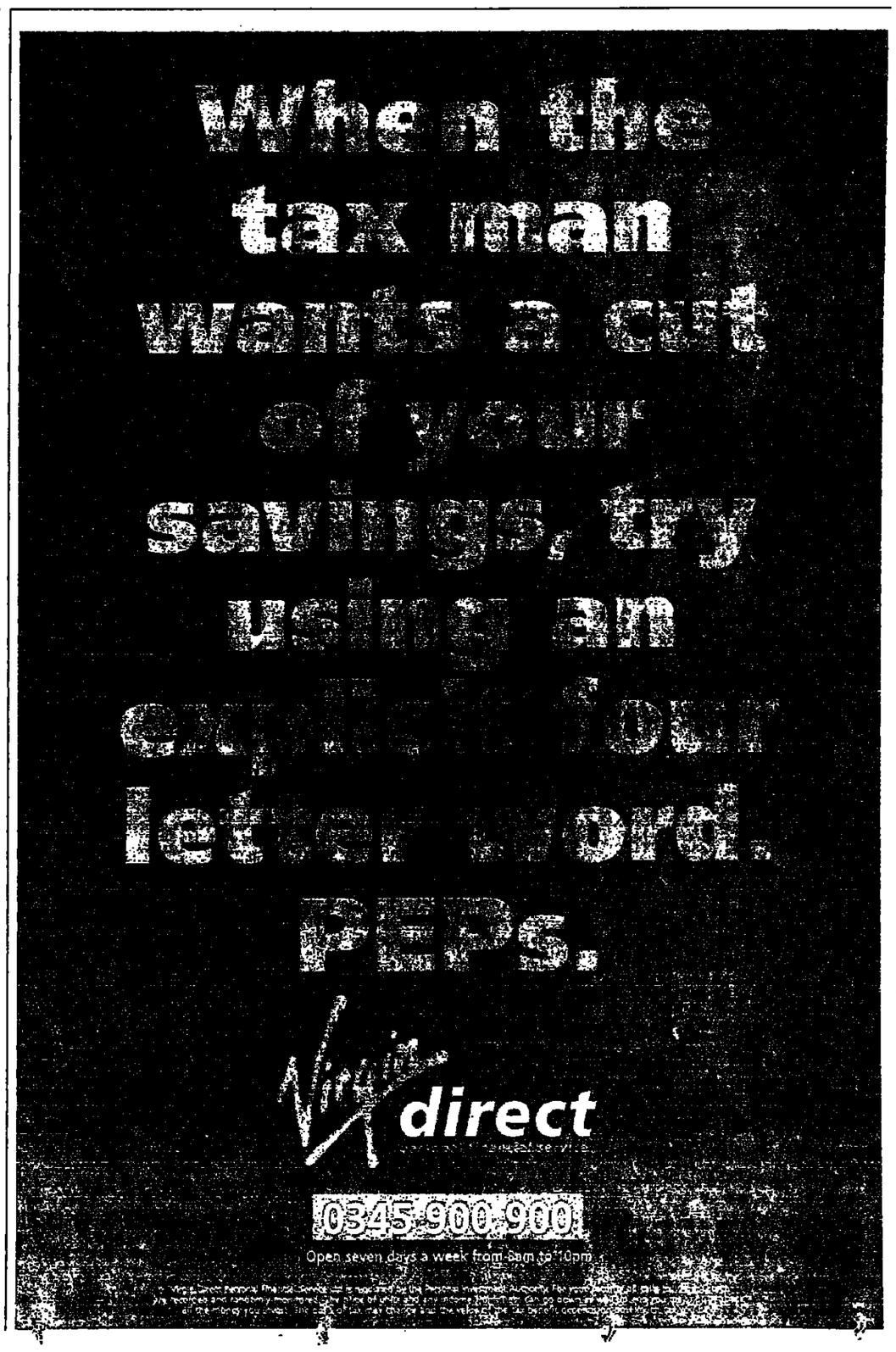
THERE may be a good reason why left-handed people were once treated with suspicion. Their peculiarity could be a betrayal of extraterrestrial origins, according to research published today.

Scientists know that amino acids — the building blocks of life from which proteins are made — come in two molecular types, known as "left-handed" and "right-handed". For living things to function, they must be based on only one of these types: they cannot be mixed together. And on Earth, left-handed amino acids were selected.

Scientists have wondered whether nature picked the left-handed form at random, or whether there is something about the universe that favoured this form. Now a new study of a meteorite that landed in Australia in 1969 suggests that the origins are extra-terrestrial.

Before there was life on Earth there were amino acids, and it is believed that many were carried here by comets and meteorites. So any evidence that the amino acids found in meteorites have a preponderance of the left-handed form would indicate that the bias was set long before life began to evolve, by some force acting early in the history of the universe. Earlier examination of the Murchison meteorite have suggested that its amino acids do show an excess of the left-handed form. But this had been dismissed as the result of accidental contamination as the meteorite was studied.

In the new research, Dr Michael Engel, of the University of Oklahoma, and Dr S.A. Macko, of the University of Virginia, have examined the ratio of nitrogen isotopes in the amino acids from the Murchison meteorite and report in *Nature* that they are enriched in nitrogen-15, a clear signal of extraterrestrial origin.



Opponents join forces against Welsh apathy

BY VALERIE ELLIOTT AND NICHOLAS WATT

JOHN PRESCOTT and William Hague both tried to invigorate the Welsh devolution campaign yesterday amid signs that apathy could be a factor in the outcome of today's referendum on the creation of a Welsh assembly.

The Deputy Prime Minister, campaigning for a "yes" vote, and the Conservative leader, calling for a "no", descended on the border town of Newport, in Monmouthshire, which has in the past shown little enthusiasm for devolution. The "yes" campaign was buoyant after a crowd cheered Mr Prescott as he told the Welsh people it was decision day and they should "go for it".

In Monmouth, Mr Hague called for a high turnout, saying: "If you still have doubts after the government hype and propaganda from their party machine, you should reject devolution." Brushing off questions as to whether his Welsh fiancée, Ffion Jenkins, shared his view, Mr Hague said: "I haven't discussed it with her. I am not entirely sure she is entitled to vote."

IE OR NA

Some 2,218,850 voters are registered for today's ballot but, with a third of Welsh voters still undecided, both sides will be campaigning hard to encourage people to vote. Polling stations will be open from 7am until 10pm. Voters will be asked one question: Do you agree there should be a Welsh assembly? They must tick "yes" or "no" (in Welsh "ie" or "na").

In North Wales, unlikely allies are providing momentum to a vigorous campaign for a "no" vote in the referendum. Business leaders who fear an erosion of their strong links with England have found themselves on the same side as fierce Welsh patriots who dread domination by the industrialised South.

"Yes" campaigners have long feared the strength of the "no" vote in North Wales, and it was not by chance that the Prime Minister made his last campaign stop in Wrexham, near the border. "Yes" campaigners remember the 1979 referendum, when North Wales resoundingly rejected devolution.

Tony Blair's words about the economic benefits of an assembly cut little ice on the North Wales coast where business leaders look to Manchester and Liverpool, an hour's drive away, rather than to Cardiff, four hours away. David Williams, a banker in Llandudno and chairman of the North Wales Business Club, said: "We feel an affinity with Manchester and Liverpool because of a geographical and historical reality. That is where we look for investment and business. I fear that an assembly in Cardiff would be very biased to South Wales."

Down Llandudno's promenade, a strong "no" supporter, Silvan Jones, a retired economics lecturer who stood as a Labour parliamentary candidate in 1959, said: "The assembly is a poor version of the parliament offered to the Scots and not worth voting for. It is an insult." But other patriots in the North will vote "yes" in the hope of unbuckling Wales from the United Kingdom. R. S. Thomas, the Welsh poet and campaigner for independence, said the assembly was better than nothing. Speaking at his Anglesey cottage, Thomas, 84, said: "We must grasp it even though they have thrown only a few crumbs at us."

Letters, page 23

CHRIS HARRIS



Stephen Doubler, aged 13, and other supporters of a Welsh assembly await the arrival of John Prescott in Pontypridd market yesterday

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Star school says political dogma has hit progress

BY JOHN O'LEARY, EDUCATION EDITOR

ONE of the top primary schools in England accused the Government of putting political dogma above pupils' interests yesterday after it was refused permission to build larger premises despite raising half the money for the move.

Shenington Church of England School, a grant-maintained village school of 100 pupils near Banbury, in Oxfordshire, was one of only 15 to achieve the maximum score in the first primary school league tables. It has repeated the feat this summer.

The school long ago outgrew its Victorian building in the heart of the village and even a temporary building in the playground has not prevented overcrowding. But David Blunkett, the Education and Employment Secretary, has rejected a plan to sell the site and move to a new building on the outskirts of Shenington.

A letter from the Department for Education and Employment said Mr Blunkett had rejected the £750,000 scheme on grounds of cost and because there were other primary school places available in the area. But Roger Hancock, the chairman of governors, said all the neighbouring schools were full and almost half the cost of the move was being met by the Shenington.

Mr Hancock said: "It could be the writing on the wall for the school because all the indications are that an inspection which took place last week will be critical of our facilities. If we have to cut back our intake, the school will not be viable and everything we have achieved will be lost."

Tony Baldry, the Conservative MP, is writing to protest at the rejection and is seeking grounds for a legal challenge. "I think this is a shabby, spiteful and shameful decision. The only possible reason is that it is the only grant-maintained school in the county."

Mr Baldry added: "Shenington is about the only primary school in the area that hasn't been refurbished in recent decades. It cannot continue as it is and it has raised the money to do something about it, but now it is the victim of political dogma."

The school has four applicants to every place, but agreed not to expand significantly after church authorities and neighbouring schools lodged objections. Mr Hancock said: "We would not go beyond 110 pupils because we would worry that the ethos of the school would be lost."

Mr Hancock said: "We have a sale agreed for the school and have gone through the details in great detail with the Funding Agency for Schools. We were hoping to be able to move before the end of the school year. But now all our plans are in ruins."

A spokeswoman for the Department for Education and Employment said there was no question of political bias. "The scheme was subject to the same scrutiny as any other. We understand the governors are meeting next week and their response will be considered carefully."

Stress blamed for air errors

BY HARVEY ELLIOTT, AIR CORRESPONDENT

AIR traffic controllers claim that they are being subjected to intolerable stress as they try to handle an ever-increasing number of aircraft flying into and over the British Isles.

A recent spate of potentially disastrous near-misses have been blamed on controller error, which, many controllers believe, is the result of non-stop pressure at work.

"A few years ago there was a time in every day when the number of aircraft slowed down a bit," Michael Burlyn, of the Guild of Air Traffic Controllers, said. "But today, from the moment the headsets go on, it is non-stop pressure. The peak time for traffic is literally all day."

Despite breaks every two hours, controllers say that they are constantly tired and stressed although shown to be skilled and competent when subjected to official tests. Plans to ease their workload by moving the main air traffic control centre from cramped underground facilities at West Drayton to a new air traffic control centre at Fareham have been seriously delayed because of repeated problems with the software of the new computer equipment.

The Civil Aviation Authority said that it has set up a review of the new control centre but must ensure that existing services are maintained. A spokesman said: "We cannot undertake large-scale controller training in the busy summer months. This training will be stepped up as the traffic falls during the autumn."

Meanwhile the number of flights continues to grow. Controllers handled their millionth flight of the year on August 22 — earlier than ever before. The number of controllers has risen from 1,100 to 1,700 in the past five years to cope with extra demand.

Airlines are also aware of the increased problems on the ground and are racing to fit the latest anti-collision devices to their aircraft.

Editors promise to back privacy reform

By Carol Midgley and Raymond Snoddy

NEWSPAPER editors promised yesterday to support rigorous privacy reforms and help to put an end to the "deplorable practices" by some members of the press after the death of Diana, Princess of Wales.

At a meeting of the Press Complaints Commission's code of practice committee yesterday, a message was read from the Princess's brother Earl Spencer calling for a privacy law and an end to the "torture" of privacy invasion.

Afterwards Sir David English, chairman of the committee, said he believed future breaches of privacy should be investigated whether there had been a complaint or not.

Lord Wakeham, chairman of the PCC, who is urging moves to protect the privacy of Prince William and Prince Harry into adulthood, described the meeting as "very constructive". His proposals, which he outlined to the committee yesterday, were drawn up after discussion with every national newspaper editor.

He added: "The paparazzi are part of the problem, in the sense that it is the conduct of photographers generally we want to put right."

"Lord Spencer's views are very well known to me. He is very concerned about these issues."

Charles Moore, Editor of *The Daily Telegraph* and a member of the committee, said Lord Spencer had contacted him on Tuesday and asked him to convey the message.

"The text is private but in general it emphasises the enormous public support for his attack on tabloid intrusion. It called upon us all to uphold the sanctity of privacy and in particular attacked the tabloids.

"He said that to deprive someone of their privacy is a form of torture and the tabloids were the torturers. What he hoped for was that this form of journalism would



Sir David: he called for an end to intrusion

stop. It was a very clear message."

In a statement after the meeting the committee said it was undertaking an "urgent" review of the code.

It said: "The tragic death of Diana, Princess of Wales, has focused unprecedented public attention on Press intrusion, harassment and respect for privacy. As those charged with defining the code of practice, which sets the benchmarks for the ethical and professional standards of journalism, we recognise this.

"We are now undertaking an urgent review of the code. As an industry we emphasise the need for the code to be followed not just in the letter but in its full spirit.

"We support Lord Wakeham's calls for wide-ranging and rigorous reforms and recognise that there is a shared determination to rid our publications of practices which we all deplore."

The committee, comprising six national newspaper editors, four from regional papers and one each from Scotland and periodicals.

Sources said the meeting had healed a rift between Sir David English, chairman of the committee, and Mr Moore, who had suggested that Sir David, who is also chairman of Associated Newspapers, was unfit for the post on the committee. They had argued publicly about coverage of the Princess's death and its aftermath. Sir David has told Lord Wakeham, the PCC chairman, that in future breaches of privacy should be investigated whether or not there has been a complaint.

Sir David believes that the press deliberately ignored the PCC code of practice in the case of Diana, Princess of Wales, because they knew she would never complain.

Sir David believes that Professor Robert Pinker, the Privacy Commissioner should have the right to choose which cases to investigate. He said he was optimistic that, in future, there would be "a new spirit and a new attitude" in the press and that everybody now realised we have now got to get this done."

The committee's recommendations are expected to be discussed at a full meeting of the Press Complaints Commission next Wednesday. An announcement of changes to the existing code of conduct is expected within a day or two of that meeting.



PETER NICHOLLS

Lord Wakeham meeting the press yesterday after the committee pledged to end "deplorable practices"

Football strip blunder gave fans the blues

By Damian Whitworth

REPLICA football kits are not cheap and those who wear them — young, obsessive small boys or slightly mad older ones — have an extraordinary attention to detail. So when Everton fans discovered that their shirts were not exact replicas of those worn by the players, they cried foul. It transpired, however, that it was the players who were sporting the wrong design.

The outcry began when it appeared, to those who can spot such things, that the stripes on the replica shirts were not the same way up as those on the players' shirts. Calls were made to the club and the manufacturer, Umbro, to complain.

There were fears that a mistake had been made in the production of the shirts, which cost about £50. The fact that a late deal with a sponsor just before the season began had delayed the arrival of the strips in the shops made it seem all the more likely that there had been a blunder.

There had. But not with the replica shirts. Someone, somewhere had unwittingly sewn in the white and yellow stripes upside down on the players' kit.

Umbro then faced a race against time to dress the players in the correct shirts for the rest of the season. The club said that the team would be properly attired for their clash with Barnsley on Saturday.

Among those who spotted the mistake was Robert Armstrong, 13. "He was drawing a picture of the kit when he noticed the stripe was a different way up on his," his mother, Bernadette Armstrong, said. "When you pay that amount, you expect an exact replica of what the players are wearing."

A spokesman for Umbro said: "We don't know how this happened but new shirts are being sent to the club."

Everton insisted that staff in the club's commercial department had spotted the difference even before the fans did, when the replica stocks arrived in the club's shop a week before they went on sale. A spokesman said: "Those sold to fans are the correct version. The most important thing is that Everton will be playing in the right shirts on Saturday."

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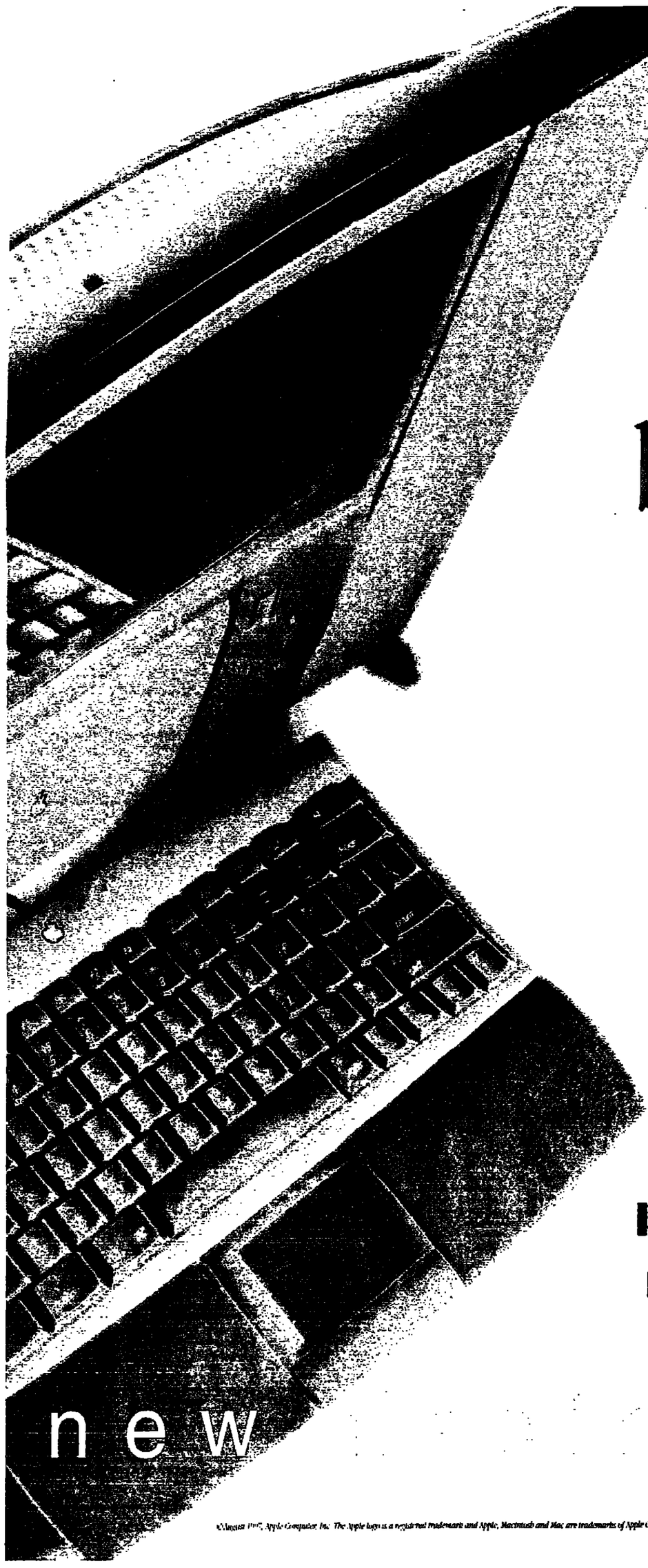
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An ideal dome show for 'best of British'

BY DAMIAN WHITWORTH

FIFTY arbiters of style and form are to decide which are the most brilliant new British innovations to be trumpeted around the world to mark the millennium. The greatest designs from the closing years of the century are to be selected from a wealth of nominations to promote Britain at home and abroad.

Tony Blair said yesterday that the initiative would prove Britain was in the forefront of a "creative revolution". Those chosen will then be promoted abroad by the British Council, and showcased on regional tours as well as at the Millennium Dome in Greenwich.

The 50 panellists from a range of fields will name Millennium Products from the thousands of inventions and services expected to be nominated to the Design Council by the companies who created them. The first successful innovations will be announced next spring and thereafter batches will be chosen every six months.

"It is time to show the world that we are not only a country with a glorious past, we are a country with a powerful future," said the Prime Minister. "Britain has an unrivalled track record of innovation and creativity.

"We were once the workshop of the world, leading the industrial revolution. Today we are leading the world in another economic revolution — a creative revolution."

Mr Blair was shown a number of products that might qualify as Millennium Products. These included an easily cleanable bucket with a lid, designed for transporting water in Third World countries, and a new cashpoint that identifies a customer by scanning his or her iris.

Millennium Products must be products or services launched on the market since January 1995 and created in Britain. John Sorrell, chairman of the Design Council, said: "But most important, it must make a difference. It must do things in a way not done before, to affect how we consume, live, work or learn. Those are the things our panel will be looking for."

Mr Sorrell said that the Millennium Products would lead to greater understanding, both at home and abroad, of what Britain could achieve. "This millennium initiative will create a legacy for the future in the form of a unique body of knowledge made up of the stories behind hundreds of new and exciting products and services — a legacy of experiences and insights which we will gather and then pass on to children in schools."

The thousands of nominations expected by the Design Council will be sifted by staff to weed out those that do not meet the basic criteria, and will then be examined by the panel working in teams of 11. Initially each panel member will be required to put in one full day of unpaid work. It is expected that 2,000 products or services will be selected over the next two years.

THE PANEL

More than half the panellists are from firms such as British Airways, Mars, Marks & Spencer and AEA Technology, as well as the Royal Mail. There are half a dozen designers including Stephen Bayley of the New Millennium Experience, James Dyson and Paul Thompson of the Design Museum. Wilf Stevenson, director of the British Film Institute and the journalists Zeinab Badawi, Will Hutton and Janet Street-Porter head a media contingent. Representatives of the arts world include Prue Leith, of the Royal Society of Arts, and Professor John Ashworth, chairman of the board of the British Library. Academics include Stephen Hawking, Germaine Greer and Sir Stephen Tumim.

PAUL HACKETT



Tony Blair at yesterday's launch. Britain leads the creative revolution, he said

WHAT THE DESIGNERS SAY



Designer and panellist: Dyson with cleaner

SIR Terence Conran — founder of Habitat, and now owner of the Conran Shops and a string of restaurants, singled out the bagless vacuum cleaner, invented by James Dyson, as the most extraordinary design of recent years: "It seems to me that innovation, design, manufacture and marketing have combined to create something that is quite remarkable. There are not many people who have done that in this country and I think it's an example to young designers to get up and do something. I also think that David Mellor, the cutler not the former Tory MP, quietly produces beautifully designed cutlery at his factory in Sheffield."

Mr Dyson, a designer and a panel member, cited Psion personal organisers, Paul Smith shirts and the latest JCBs as inspirational modern designs: "I have always loved JCB diggers. They are wonderful products. They have a very strong design team who keep coming up with new products which keep them ahead of very strong competition from America, Germany and Japan. They are a big hero company of mine. I am also a great admirer of Paul Smith because he has a very big turnover, makes a lot of his shirts in England and designs them in England and then sells them in vast quantities around the world."

Sir Clive Sinclair, inventor of the Sinclair C5, is hoping to market an ultra-lightweight pedal cycle which can be folded up and carried anywhere, but it might possibly fail to qualify as a Millennium Product because it may not be ready by the end of the century: "I would nominate the Lotus Elise sports car, which is half the weight of its competitors because of a clever and radical design."

Sensations vary at RA exhibition

■ Public reaction to the widely publicised Royal Academy show yesterday was, like the exhibits themselves, a mixed bag. Dalya Alberge reports

MEMBERS of the public, rather than art critics, were yesterday allowed into the Royal Academy of Arts to give their opinion of an exhibition that includes dismembered limbs and rotting animal carcasses. While some voiced outrage and disgust, others said they were not as shocked as they had expected to be.

Sensation, a loan show from Charles Saatchi, features works such as the Chapman brothers' sculpture of mutant mannequins with genitalia for facial features and a Damien Hirst piece involving thousands of flies feeding off a rotting cow's head.

Galia Gafson, a travel agent, said: "There is a lot of rubbish here. It's not something you'd bring children to. It's made to shock. It's disgusting, especially as the Royal Academy is such a prestigious house." Commenting on the Chapman brothers' work, she said: "It's pornography. For that, I don't need to go to the RA. Rembrandt and Degas must turn in their graves."

Her friend, Avril Doctor, a sculptor, was repulsed by Hirst's piece: "I feel physically sick." However, she also felt there was some humour there. "No," Ms Gafson interrupted. "flies eating from a cow's head? Not in the Royal Academy."

Edna Dickinson, from London, said of the Chapman brothers' dismembered limbs hanging from a tree: "It's not art."

Several visitors expressed concern about the smell of rotting animal carcass. Yvonne Vander Heul, an artist, pointed it out to a guard, who insisted there was no problem. Her friend, Clive Hirschhorn, said that putting such art in the RA gave it a respect that it did not deserve. Looking at the Chapman sculpture, he said: "I can't imagine what living with that does to the brain. It has no aesthetic merit. Goya was making a very real statement about war. That's just pure mutilation."

Edward Marshall, a retired film production designer, said: "There are a lot of things here which are unpleasant." David Armstrong, a former university administrator, said: "It's pathetic, second-rate artists trying to shock. It's mediocre and boring. Art students have not known what to do for the last 30 years."

Those who applauded the show included Maggie Winkworth, a counselling

Leading article 23

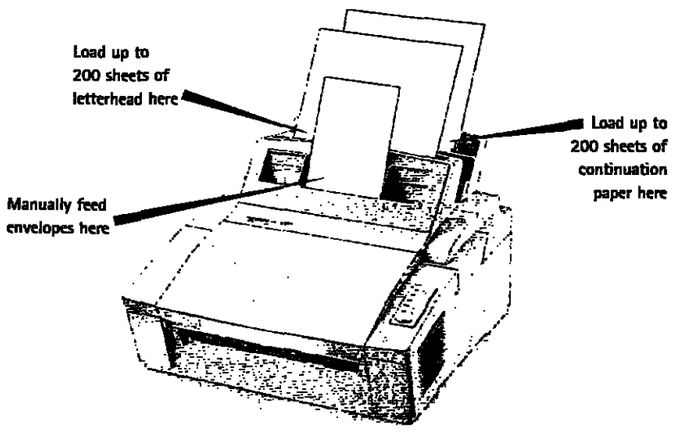
pyschologist. Looking at Hirst's sliced pig in formaldehyde, she said: "I feel overpowered by it. It invites me to really question my reactions to it." She criticised the decision to exhibit Marcus Harvey's portrait of Myra Hindley, made from children's palmprints, and which had distressed the families of Hindley's victims. "It has nothing to do with art. It's about compassion for them. It's amoral and totally insensitive to show it because of the family."

Pusia Fleming, an art student, said of the show: "It's fun. It's shocking in a fun way." Peter Rose, a retired art lecturer, said: "Most things I don't like but it's stimulating and challenging." Karsten Schubert, a dealer in contemporary art, said: "It's a good show. If you don't like it, go somewhere else."

The show opened yesterday to Friends of the Royal Academy. It opens to the general public today.



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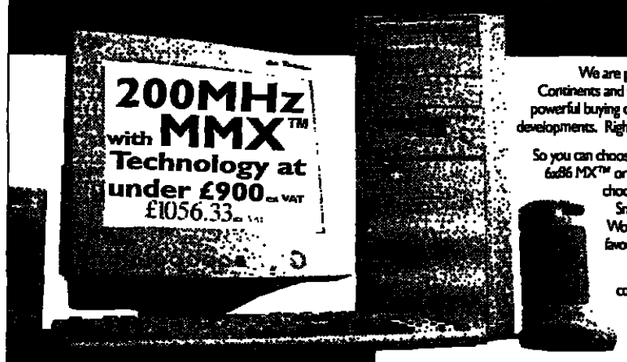
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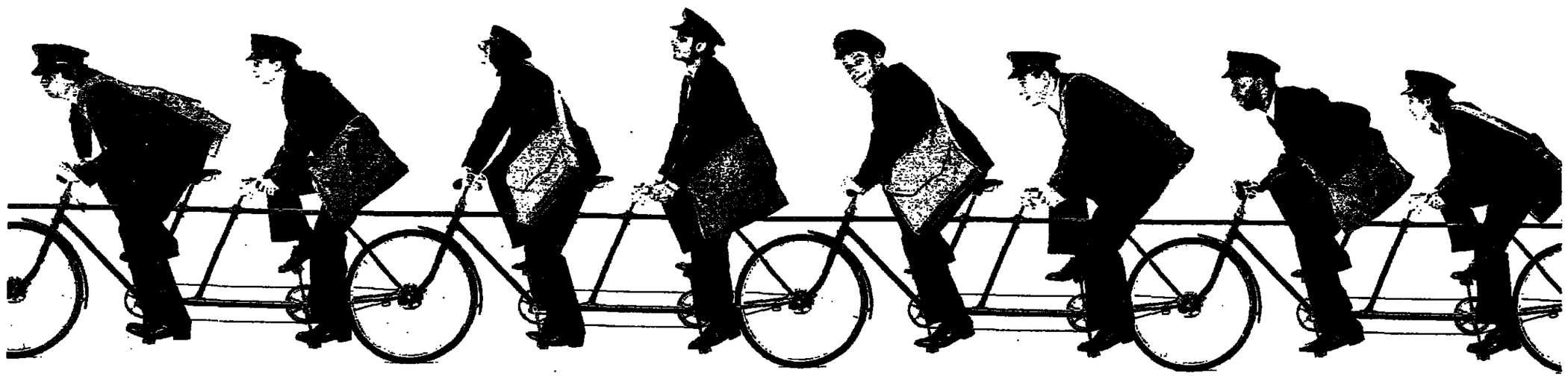
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Briton leads attempt to revive woolly mammoth

Scientists believe they may be able to recreate extinct animal in Jurassic Park style, using sperm from carcass in permafrost, reports Nick Nuttall

A BRITISH scientist is to search for the remains of woolly mammoths beneath the Siberian permafrost in the hope of obtaining genetic material to recreate the extinct species.

David Smale, a British geophysicist, will head an Anglo-Japanese expedition which will use ground-penetrating radar of the kind used by police looking for murder victims as they hunt for mammoths preserved for 40,000 years in the permafrost.

Kazugumi Goto, a veterinary scientist from Kagoshima University in Japan who commissioned the expedition, believes that modern genetic technology might be able to reproduce a woolly mammoth in a similar way to how dinosaurs were recreated in the film *Jurassic Park*.

Dr Goto has found that injecting DNA from the sperm of dead bulls into cows' eggs can produce viable embryos. He wants to employ the same technique to inject DNA from preserved mammoth sperm into the eggs of African elephants. Over successive generations, he argues, "purer" mammoths could be bred by fertilising hybrid eggs with more mammoth sperm. The method would effectively breed out the elephant's genetic material.

News of the mammoth hunt was reported in *New Scientist*. Mr Smale, from London consulting engineers Mott MacDonald, recently returned from a preliminary trip to Siberia which was thwarted by Russian customs officials who impounded his equipment.

He hopes to return to the northeastern Siberian republic of Sakha next summer to search for mammoths in permafrost cliffs overlooking the Kolyma river. The region has yielded a number of mammoth finds where erosion has exposed their preserved remains.

Mr Smale said yesterday: "Mammoths turn up there with reasonable regularity. In the banks of the rivers in this area you have Pleistocene ice and permafrost dating back more than 30,000 years.

"We'll be looking between five and 20 metres under the surface, which should be well within range. Permafrost is good for radar."

The device, about the size of a lawnmower, is pulled along the ground firing radar pulses into the earth which bounce off hidden objects. The echoes are picked up by detectors on the surface to compute images showing their position.

If a mammoth is found, it will be excavated by melting the surrounding permafrost with fires and jets of water so as not to harm the carcass. Any sperm extracted will be stored in freezers and returned to Japan.

Dr Goto will be going with Mr Smale, assisted by Peter Lazarev, a mammoth expert from the Museum of the Mammoth in Yakutsk, the nearest major city.

However, Jeremy Austin, a microbiologist from the Natural History Museum in London, who has unsuccessfully searched for DNA in prehistoric insects preserved in amber, believes they cannot succeed. "All that's left of mammoth DNA are shattered little fragments. You are never going to get enough to put all the pieces together."

Adrian Lister, a mammoth expert from University College London, said: "Everything we know about the preservation of DNA in frozen tissue suggests that it is smashed up into fragments." Of six woolly mammoths found frozen, only one found in 1903 had intact genitals.



Sperm taken from preserved mammoths will be injected into elephant eggs

Only the fittest to survive odyssey to Mars

BY NICK NUTTALL

ASTRONAUTS on a voyage to Mars face even deadlier perils than the explorers on Earth who braved snake bites, scurvy, head-hunters, shipwrecks and other hazards to discover new trading routes and lands.

Researchers assessing the hazards on a trip to the Red Planet have concluded that only the right kind of people would be fitted to survive the journey and the climate of Mars on arrival.

Dangers include killer cosmic rays, cancer, muscle wastage and bone loss from zero gravity, equipment failure, and the very real risk of going mad.

Scientists are busy trying to find ways to minimise the hazards as much as possible. But there is no doubt that a Mars odyssey will be one of the most dangerous feats of human endeavour ever attempted.

The dangers are outlined in the magazine *New Scientist*. The Mars mission is expected to take more than two years – six months to get there, another six to return and 18 months on the planet waiting for the next "launch window".

Cosmic rays will be a major hazard on a long flight so far from Earth. Beyond the Earth's protective atmosphere and magnetic field, atomic nuclei are shooting around like highly charged bullets.

When they strike flesh "they blow biological molecules to bits", said *New Scientist*. They also generate electrons and gamma rays when they hit anything solid.

Solar flares, thrown out by the Sun about once a year, produce huge doses of high energy protons "that would kill unprotected astronauts within hours".

To meet this danger the Mars spaceship would need a protected "storm shelter" where the crew could retreat should a flare occur.

On Mars there would be little protection from cosmic radiation afforded by the planet's thin atmosphere and weak magnetic field. The astronauts would simply have to accept the risk of cancer caused by the total doses of radiation they would be exposed to.

"Just as explorers on Earth used to take for granted the risks of snake bite, scurvy, and shipwrecks, interplanetary explorers may have to accept a higher cancer risk as part of the deal," said *New Scientist*.

Beer-belly pill 'will encourage drinking'

BY IAN MURRAY

A PILL derived from kidney beans that is claimed to stop beer drinkers developing a big belly was attacked yesterday for encouraging people to drink.

Nutri-health, which makes the herbal remedy marketed as Beer Blok, says an active ingredient in the beans hinders the body enzyme that turns excess carbohydrates into glucose and fat.

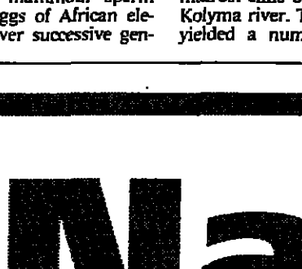
Steve Freak, managing director of the Chichester-based company, said that all a beer drinker had to do to avoid putting on weight was take a pill 15 minutes before the first pint and another before every other round. The company's trials showed that up to 80 per cent of beer drinkers who tried the pill had lost weight.

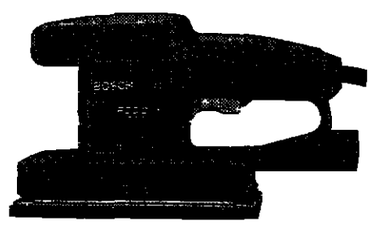
But a spokesman for Alcohol Concern said that the danger was that people who had reduced consumption because they were worried about putting on weight would think it was now all right to drink as much as they wanted.

"Putting on weight is one of the lesser dangers of drinking large amounts of beer," he said. "There are all sorts of other health risks like liver disease, heart disease and cancer, which are far more serious and this product doesn't address any of these."

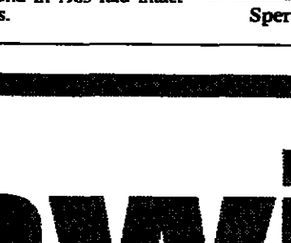
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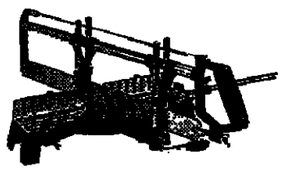


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Adi Roche, Dana and Mary Banotti, whose beliefs span the spectrum of Irish life. Ms Roche is favourite to win

Women-only battle for Irish presidency

The defeat of Albert Reynolds means that Ireland's next President will be female. But the candidates' views differ widely, says Audrey Magee

THE fight to become the next Irish President turned into a women-only battle yesterday after Albert Reynolds, the former Prime Minister, was rejected by his party in favour of a Belfast academic.

Mary McAleese, the Pro-Vice-Chancellor of Queen's University, was the unexpected winner over Mr Reynolds in a secret ballot in Dublin yesterday for the Fianna Fail candidacy. She now takes on three other women, including Dana, the 1970 Eurovision winner, in the battle to succeed Mary Robinson, who resigned last week to become the UN Human Rights Commissioner.

The women span the political spectrum. Dana is a fundamentalist Roman Catholic staunchly opposed to abortion; Adi Roche is a politically correct anti-nuclear campaigner, whose fashionable friends include Bono, singer with the rock band U2. In between are Professor McAleese, who shares some of Dana's religious and anti-abortion sentiments, and Mary Banotti, an MEP with liberal values.

Originally from West Belfast, Professor McAleese, 46, has been secretly lobbying Fianna Fail for some months, but only formally announced her interest two weeks ago when John Hume, the SDLP leader, declined to stand. She had initially been dismissed by the party but gathered backing as the "Anyone but Albert" campaign gained pace. Fianna Fail members were increasingly worried that Mr Reynolds's campaign would be shrouded in allegations of sleaze and that, should Mr Reynolds win, the minority Government would lose a by-election.

Professor McAleese, who is married with three children, said she was "honoured and proud" to stand for Fianna Fail. Ten years ago, she stood unsuccessfully for the party in an election in Dublin. She left politics and concentrated on her academic career, becoming the first Catholic to gain a senior position in Queen's and becoming the university's first woman pro-vice-chancellor.

She studied and lived in Dublin in the 1980s when she lectured at Trinity College and succeeded Mrs Robinson as the university's Reid Professor of Criminal Law, Criminology and Penology.

She is known for her staunch Catholicism, supporting the Church's stance on abortion and divorce. But she clashed with the bishops in 1994 when revelations of widespread paedophilia in the Church came to light.

Her victory surprised many in Fianna Fail. It is the first time that a former party leader has been rejected as a presidential candidate by the party.

Mr Reynolds said that he was "very disappointed" at his defeat but ruled out standing as an independent. "The party has a democratic right to make its choice, and I will live with that," he said.

The professor's toughest opponent is Ms Roche, the 42-year-old human rights activist put forward by the Irish left-wing parties. Ms Roche is the bookies' favourite with odds of 6-4 on, compared with 10-1 against Professor McAleese yesterday.

Ms Roche is famed for her work alongside Ali Hewson, Bono's wife, on the Chernobyl Children's Project and is a former Irish Person of The Year. Bono and Mrs Hewson describe Ms Roche as "a great friend" and say they will give as much help to the campaign as possible.

The charity organises holidays in Ireland, Britain and the United States for young victims of the 1986 Chernobyl nuclear disaster. It has also dispatched hundreds of tonnes of supplies to the area.

Ms Roche, originally from Tipperary, has a strong record on humanitarian issues. She does not have the professor's intellectual strength or knowledge of constitutional law, which may place her at a disadvantage during the six-week campaign. She was nominated earlier this week by the Irish Labour Party and quickly backed by the Democratic Left.

Dana, 44, a mother of four, has secured the backing of four county councils to run in the election. She lives in Alabama, the heart of the American Bible Belt, where she hosts a chat show on Mother Angelica, a cable television station, and regularly sings for the Pope. She will mount a large-scale campaign, with financial backing from anti-abortion groups in Ireland and the United States. Since August the bookies have shortened her odds of securing the presidency from 100-1 to 8-1.

Ms Banotti, 58, is standing for Fine Gael. A nurse turned politician, she is a niece of Michael Collins, the founding father of the IRA, and sister of Nora Owen, the deputy leader of Fine Gael. She is divorced and brought up her daughter alone.

Before the nominations of the three other women, Ms Banotti was the bookies' favourite to win on October 30, but now she has been eclipsed.

FRANK MILLER

Mary McAleese, who beat Albert Reynolds to become Fianna Fail's candidate

Literacy deputy to head Parole Board

BY RICHARD FORD
HOME CORRESPONDENT

USHA PRASHAR, deputy chairman of the National Literacy Trust, was appointed last night to be the next chairman of the Parole Board.

Ms Prashar, 49, will take up the post next month and is expected to bring the board, which considers when prisoners can be released on parole, more into the public eye. Ms Prashar has spent almost all her career working in quangos or voluntary organisations since she joined the Race Relations Board in 1971.

Insiders said yesterday that Ms Prashar's appointment to the Parole Board, which surprised some observers, was linked to the contacts she had made since serving on the Lord Chancellor's Advisory Committee on Legal Education and Conduct and her membership of the Royal Commission on Criminal Justice. "Membership of those bodies gave her a considerable entrée to the criminal justice system in which she is now well-connected," one source said.

Ms Prashar, who is married without children, came to this country on her own from Kenya as a schoolgirl to study for her O levels at Wakefield Girls' High School in 1964. Leaving the Duchess of Gloucester School in Nairobi and her parents behind, she lived with her late brother in Featherstone, Yorkshire.

Brenda Prashar, her sister-in-law, said: "She is a remarkable person. She arrived in this country on her own to complete her education. It was not easy for people from that background then. It was a strange situation for all of us. It was very difficult".

Within two years of arriving in this country, she was head girl of the Yorkshire direct grant school. She took a degree in political studies at Leeds University followed by a postgraduate diploma in social administration at Glasgow University.

Since then Ms Prashar has held a series of jobs and positions. One source said: "She pops up in a lot of places. Her networks are immensely good."



Prashar: expected to put board in public eye

Government fights human rights violation ruling

Decision on Ulster workers could force change of law, reports Frances Gibb

THE Government is contesting a ruling by the European Commission on Human Rights which says it has violated human rights in Northern Ireland by blocking people who are deemed a security risk from seeking redress in the courts.

The commission unanimously found that in two cases Roman Catholics who were refused public works building contracts on alleged "security risk" grounds had had their human rights breached because they had no way of challenging the decisions.

In both cases, the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland had issued certificates which effectively blocked the men from mounting claims that they had suffered religious discrimination.

The commission has already referred its finding to the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg for a final ruling, expected next year. But in a rare move, the Government has also referred the case to the court, indicating that it intends strongly to contest it, despite its policy to incorporate the human rights convention into law.

In recent months the Government has also referred one other case, tried to refer a second (which fell outside the time limits) and is expected to refer a third.

In the latest case, Patrick and Gerard Tinnelly and their company John Tinnelly & Sons tendered for demolition work with the Northern Ireland Electricity Services. Their tender was the lowest, but they won neither the contract nor a sub-contract.

They lodged a complaint with the Fair Employment Agency (now commission) for Northern Ireland.

The Secretary of State then issued a certificate under section 42 of the Fair Employment (Northern Ireland Act) that the decision not to award the contract had been on national security grounds, with the effect that they could not pursue their complaint.

In the second case, a contractor submitted the names of Kevin, Michael, Paddy and Barry McElduff as the people he intended to employ on contract works with the Department of Employment in Omagh, Co Tyrone, but security clearance was refused. They too made a complaint under the Fair Employment Act that the refusal of the contract was discriminatory and the Secretary of State likewise issued a certificate barring the tribunal from hearing their claim.

The Tinnellys and the McElduffs say that the certificates denied them access to a court in violation of the European convention. The courts, they said, should be able to determine whether national security reasons had justified the refusal.

The Government claimed that the restrictions on access to a court were necessary. There was a need, it said, for confidential security vetting in public works contracts.

The contractors' cases were argued by Lord Lester of Herne Hill, QC, with the backing of the Fair Employment Commission, which is aware of 50 cases involving certificates, mostly in the public sector, since 1990. Bob Cooper, chairman of the Fair Employment Commission, said: "If the European court follows suit, we shall be looking to the Government to change the law. We have for a very long time said that the issue of these certificates should be subject to some form of scrutiny."

The procedure was also attacked in June by the Standing Advisory Commission on Human Rights which called for "effective judicial scrutiny of whether an act was in fact done for the purpose of safeguarding national security or of protecting public safety or public order".

Lord Lester brought a previous successful challenge at the European Court of Justice in Luxembourg when security certificates were issued to block sex discrimination claims by women part-time reservists in the RUC who were not allowed to be armed. The court held that alleged victims of sex discrimination could not be stopped from having the merits of their cases examined, even where national security was involved. The law had to be modified.

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Bottled water is overpriced con, say rivals

A report has called for the industry to clean up its act, reports **Joanna Bale**

BOTTLED water is an expensive marketing trick and sometimes contains bacteria that make it less healthy than tap water, it was claimed yesterday.

A report from the Water Companies Association, which represents 17 privatised firms, urged the £1 billion bottled water industry to "clean up its act" by reducing prices, reviewing marketing methods and making its packaging and transportation less damaging to the environment. But the British Soft Drinks Association claimed that superior taste and quality was behind bottled water's success.

Pamela Taylor, chief executive of the Water Companies Association, described bottled water as "one of the great cons of the 20th century ... It is marketing's answer to the emperor's new clothes."

But Robert Hayward, director-general of the soft drinks association, said: "Consumers buy our products because of their taste, consistency of quality and convenience."

According to the report, bottled water differs little from tap water, but consumers are paying "massively over the odds" for it. A litre of tap water costs, on average, 0.07p, while a litre of bottled water costs, on average, 50p. The report said there was no justification for the huge price difference.

According to the report, 66 per cent of bottled water sold in this country is still, as opposed to sparkling. In a *Sunday Times* blind tasting, experts compared five tap waters with five bottled waters. They could not tell the difference between the two: Kent tap water and Evian bottled water scored the highest marks.

The report says that tap water is more closely controlled than bottled water. "While bacteria levels in bottled water are only regulated for the first 12 hours after bottling, bacteria levels in tap water are controlled right up to the point at which it reaches the consumer."

The report cites a survey by Leeds University last year which found that almost 2 per cent of still bottled water in supermarkets contained sufficient bacteria to fall below national standards. "Once a bottle has been opened, bacteria can grow in the water, unlike tap water, which contains minute quantities of chlorine to protect it. In health terms, leaving out an opened bottle of water is just the same as leaving out a piece of meat."

The report questions the marketing methods used to sell bottle water, with its images of health, sport, and vitality. The British Olympic Association, British Association for Sports Medicine and the British Medical Association saw no advantage in drinking bottled water.

Bottled water damages the environment more than than tap water, the report claims, since most plastic bottles end up in landfill sites and are not recycled. Transporting water, particularly imported water, causes toxic fuel emissions, road congestion and noise.

Mr Hayward said that, owing to the introduction of an EU directive, standards of bottled water would improve further. Keeping up quality was expensive, as bottled water companies had to meet tough rules on extraction, hygiene and production, he insisted.

"It seems rather surprising that an industry [tap water] that has had to turn to us on more than one occasion to ensure consumers continue to receive water supplies is now criticising us. One could say that an industry that has had to deal with problems such as cryptosporidium outbreaks, pollution of water supplies from diesel, lead and nitrates, *E.coli* contamination and discoloration, to name but a few, would appear to have more than enough to keep it busy."

SLAKING YOUR THIRST IN STYLE

The most expensive bottled water is thought to be from the American designer label DKNY at £1.50 for 480ml (about £3.13 a litre).

It is described by its manufacturers as "clear and refreshing alpine spring water" from a California source. It is sold in a clear plastic bottle featuring a label with the DKNY logo and a picture of New York taxis. There is also a nozzle to drink from rather than a screwtop. The bottles are available only at the Donna Karan shop in London.

A *Times* survey of top restaurants found that they will all serve customers tap water if requested. A spokeswoman for Le Manoir aux Quat' Saisons in Great Milton, Oxfordshire, gave a typical response: "We do not offer it unless they make a special request, but that rarely happens. We believe there is a difference in taste and quality." The restaurant charges about £2 for a large bottle of Evian or Badoit.

DKNY water comes from a California bottler who sells the same water to a supermarket chain where it retails for a fraction of the price. A DKNY spokeswoman yesterday declined to comment on how the company could justify its high charges.

ADRIAN SHERRATT



Tamara Berton outside the hearing: she claims she was a victim of blind racism

WPC in racism claim 'made string of errors'

BY RICHARD DUCE

A JEWISH American trainee policewoman was given a "D for common sense" rating after a series of errors that led to her sacking from the Metropolitan Police, an industrial tribunal was told yesterday.

Tamara Berton was castigated by a senior officer for trying to call in social services after a mother briefly left her three young children in her car. She was also rebuked for making an urgent call for assistance after believing she could smell marijuana in a car she had stopped.

Mrs Berton, 50, from Soho, the first Jewish American woman to join the Metropolitan Police, is claiming unfair dismissal on the grounds of racial discrimination. She says assessment of her work at Belgravia police station was a conspiracy to get her sacked because she was a "stereotypical, loud, brash Yank".

Georgina Kent, for the Metropolitan Police, highlighted other flaws in Mrs Berton's work which led to her dismissal in June last year. She was considered "not likely to become an efficient and well-conducted constable".

In August 1995 she failed to report that a prisoner had temporarily escaped before being recaptured during a hospital visit. Mrs Berton, who holds joint British and American nationality, was also accused by a fellow officer of falling asleep while guarding a prisoner in hospital, a claim she denied yesterday.

The tribunal heard that Mrs Berton, a divorced mother of one, also wrongly filled in a custody observation report for a prisoner who had been released five hours earlier.

Asked why she had tried to involve social services when the mother left her children in a car in Central London, Mrs Berton said: "I thought it was terribly reprehensible. I was absolutely appalled. There were three young children, two were crying and one was a baby." Miss Kent said: "To notify social services that children were at risk — do you think that was the correct procedure?" Mrs Berton replied: "I defend my actions. I am a mother."

At a case conference called to discuss her future with the police, her senior officer gave her a B for enthusiasm but D for common sense, Miss Kent told the tribunal.

Mrs Berton, a graduate from Boston University, moved to London in 1985. She dreamt of joining the police after gaining British citizenship and started as a probationer with the force in 1994.

She has told the tribunal she became the victim of "blind racism" and one officer told her not to wear lipstick because her lips were too large. Mrs Berton said she had been the victim of a "witch hunt" where all her mistakes were picked up by senior officers who constantly monitored her performance.

The hearing in Croydon continues today.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Teenager in court over school attack

A 15-year-old boy appeared before Preston magistrates yesterday, accused of wounding Jamie Evans, aged 16, who was stabbed in a school corridor on Tuesday. The youth, who cannot be named, was released on conditional bail and is due to appear before Preston Youth Court today. He spoke only to confirm his name, age and address throughout the ten-minute hearing. Reporting restrictions were not lifted. Jamie was in a stable and satisfactory condition in Blackpool's Victoria Hospital yesterday after the knife attack.

150,000 VWs recalled

Volkswagen has recalled 150,000 cars in one of the biggest safety alerts in Britain. Dealers have called back Ventos and Golfs made between 1994 and 1997 for faulty headlamp wiring. The company's biggest recall was in May 1995, when 310,000 Golfs were ordered back to dealers because of engine overheating problems. Nearly 300,000 cars have been recalled by 12 motor companies since the beginning of July.

Motorcycle youth held

A 13-year-old boy was held by police on suspicion of being drunk in charge of a motorcycle after a head-on crash in which another boy was killed. David Tucker, 14, who had not been wearing a crash helmet, died in hospital from head injuries after he and the other youngster crashed into each other while riding scramble motorcycles in a field at Lane End, Buckinghamshire. The youth was released without charge and police inquiries are continuing.

Dakota's daughter dies

The daughter of a member of the Sixties pop band Billy J. Kramer and the Dakotas died after being struck by a car near her home. Lucinda Maxfield, 9, of Stockport, near Manchester, was kept alive on a life-support machine after the accident on Monday, but her parents made the decision to switch it off 24 hours later. Her father, Mike, was the original lead guitarist in the band and is now a business lecturer at Salford University.

Family seeks lost ashes

A bereaved family have complained that they have been unable to grieve for nearly a year because Parcelforce *lost their mother's ashes. Ivy Handel died at 75 in Brisbane,* Australia, last year after emigrating there 12 years ago. Her ashes were to be scattered around the family plot in East London, but never arrived. Parcelforce has offered £250 in compensation, but the family have declined.

Itchy bull trips switch

A South Western Electricity Board technical team called out to trace the source of a series of power cuts that blacked out supplies to dozens of homes around the Westonzoyland area of Somerset discovered that a bull had rubbed through a cable while trying to scratch its back. The exposed wire came into contact with another cable, causing the power to trip.

Cash for ancient boat

A Bronze Age boat found five years ago during road excavations in Dover is to go on permanent display after the award of £953,000 from the National Lottery. The timbers of the 3,000-year-old boat have been soaked in soluble wax to strenghten them before being freeze-dried. It will be displayed in an air-conditioned gallery which has yet to be built.

Chocolate on the tracks

The sweet company Mars began its first venture into the chocolate-box market with the launch of Celebrations, a selection of miniature replicas of Mars, Snickers, Bounty and Galaxy bars and Maltesers. A train full of celebrities left London yesterday to travel the country promoting the new brand, which hopes to capture a big share of the £600 million chocolate-box market.

Auction at mansion untouched by time

BY JOHN SHAW

THE contents of an Edwardian country house in Scotland, barely disturbed since the turn of the century, are to go on sale next week.

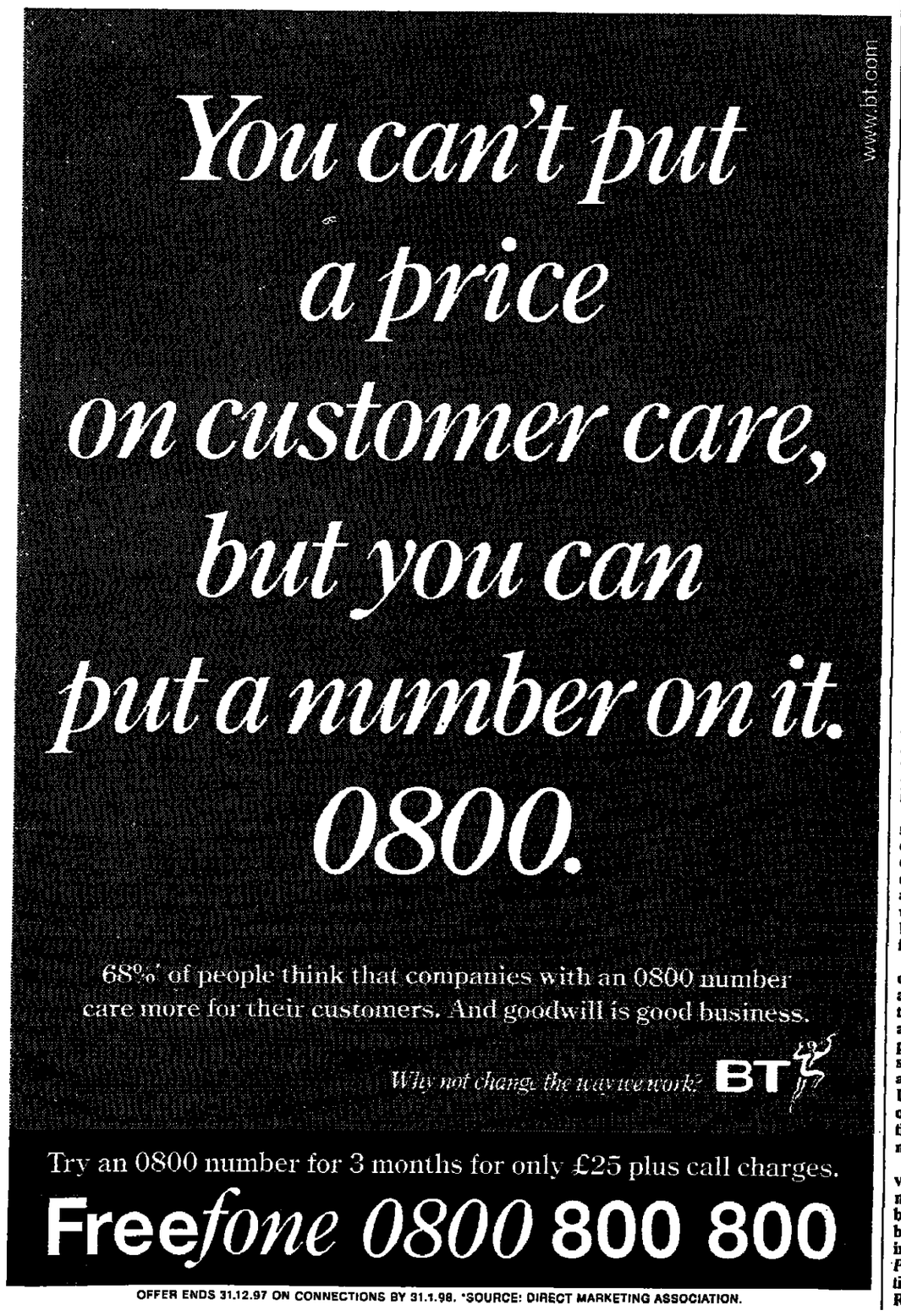
Ladykirk, at Monkton, near Prestwick, South Ayrshire, was built by Robert Angus, a mining magnate, in 1903. It was furnished in the height of contemporary taste and completed in 1906.

Next Tuesday and Wednesday items ranging from Edwardian straw hats to day dresses to a full-size billiard table will be auctioned on the premises for an estimated total of £300,000.

Auction-goers will be struck by the elegant interiors. Each room reflects a different style, from Chippendale to Louis XV, and Jacobean to high Victorian. All are virtually unchanged since 1906 and even the receipts for furniture have survived.

The decision to sell has come from the present generation of the family who want to move to a smaller house and scale down the family possessions. Daniel Angus said: "Although it saddens us all greatly to have to part with Ladykirk, the responsibilities of maintaining a property of this size have proved too much in recent years."

The Victorian pictures, silver and English and continental ceramics reflect a bygone era. A complete library will be sold by Phillips, including a copy of *The Peter Pan Portfolio*, a limited edition of illustrations by Arthur Rackham from 1910.





How England tackled football's tiniest giants

Nick Nuttall reports on a kickabout where the play was simply electric

THE players do what they are told. they have no emotional problems in their private lives, and injuries can be sorted with a bit of wiring and perhaps a piece of Lego.

This is robot football, a computer-controlled game which is spawning teams at research laboratories across the world. Supporters believe that the programming of the 8cm-high players will help in the development of artificial intelligence for the defence and home-electronic industries. It also gives the scientific community a chance of sporting glory.

Some of the electronic players who are the giants of robot football were in Britain yesterday from Korea for a friendly kickabout with the only English team — coached by an Open University researcher at Milton Keynes — in a warm-up for next year's world championships in Paris. No score was recorded.

"It was pretty amazing for the Koreans to come, seeing as they are a bit bruised and battered after a gruelling European tour," said the English coach, Dr Jeff Johnson, showing that robot-football comments can sound similar to the full-size game, even though his players are made from Lego. "We hope to go all the way next year."



The miniature players with their managers, Dr Jeff Johnson and Professor Jong-Hwan Kim

The game is played with an orange ball and each team has three players. The rules of the newly formed Federation of International Robot Football Associations allow pitches of 130cms by 90cms, with goals 30cms wide. Dr Johnson said: "The players can have arms and legs, but the limitations of the technology means that they are only cubes on wheels."

Two metres above the pitch is a camera that images the ball and the position of the squads. These are relayed to computers, one for each team. The skill of the coach is to programme strategies which are signalled to the players by a radio link, telling them where to move to hit the ball.

Dr Johnson said the game was in some ways more challenging than computer chess games that pitch grandmasters against electronic intelligence. "Robot football is much more chaotic," he said. One team hits the ball off the side of the pitch, another goes for hit and run, and a third has a developed a way of getting robots to "wiggle" when taking penalties. Penalty skills are important, as robot football involves a lot of fouls. Colliding with an opponent's robots is a penalty, and pushing the goalie under any circumstances is not allowed.

Packing the defence or the goal is also banned, and dribbling is almost impossible. "The way we play, the robots hurl themselves at the ball and, if you are lucky, the ball goes forward. Given the contraints of the technology, it is very hard to make a robot go from A to B and kick a ball through point C." The Koreans are already developing 4cm robots, opening up the possibility of 11-a-side games.

Yesterday's visiting players were the Miro and Soty teams from the Korean Advanced Institute of Science and Technology, where Professor Jong-Hwan Kim is the father of robot football. Korean teams took second, third and fourth place in this year's world championship. It was won by the Newton Laboratories from the United States.

Human football, pages 46, 52

FINDLAY KEMBER



Big match: a competition game earlier this year. Robot football is "more chaotic than computerised chess"

Murdered teacher offer is rejected

BY LIN JENKINS

AN OFFER to send a team of British detectives to help to find the murderer of a British teacher bludgeoned in her home on a Caribbean island has been turned down by the Bahamian police.

A month after Carol Leach, 37, a primary school teacher, was killed by a single blow to the head, probably with the blunt end of a machete, the authorities on the island of Eleuthera have not identified her killer.

Her mother, Eve Gamson, who is back at her home in Coleford, Somerset, after sorting out her daughter's affairs, suspects she was murdered because of her vocal crusade against drugs. Mrs Gamson, 63, believes that the team of Bahamian police who flew to the tiny island, with a population of just 10,000, have made little progress and are not doing enough to find the killer.

"The drug trade is so open out there and Carol despised it. She was outspoken in her contempt for this aspect of life on the island — probably too outspoken," she said.

A Bahamian police spokesman said that inquiries into the murder were continuing.

Pets killed as mink escape from farm

BY A STAFF REPORTER

PET owners are being warned to keep their animals indoors after 500 mink escaped from a farm in Elland, west Yorkshire, and savaged chickens and guinea pigs.

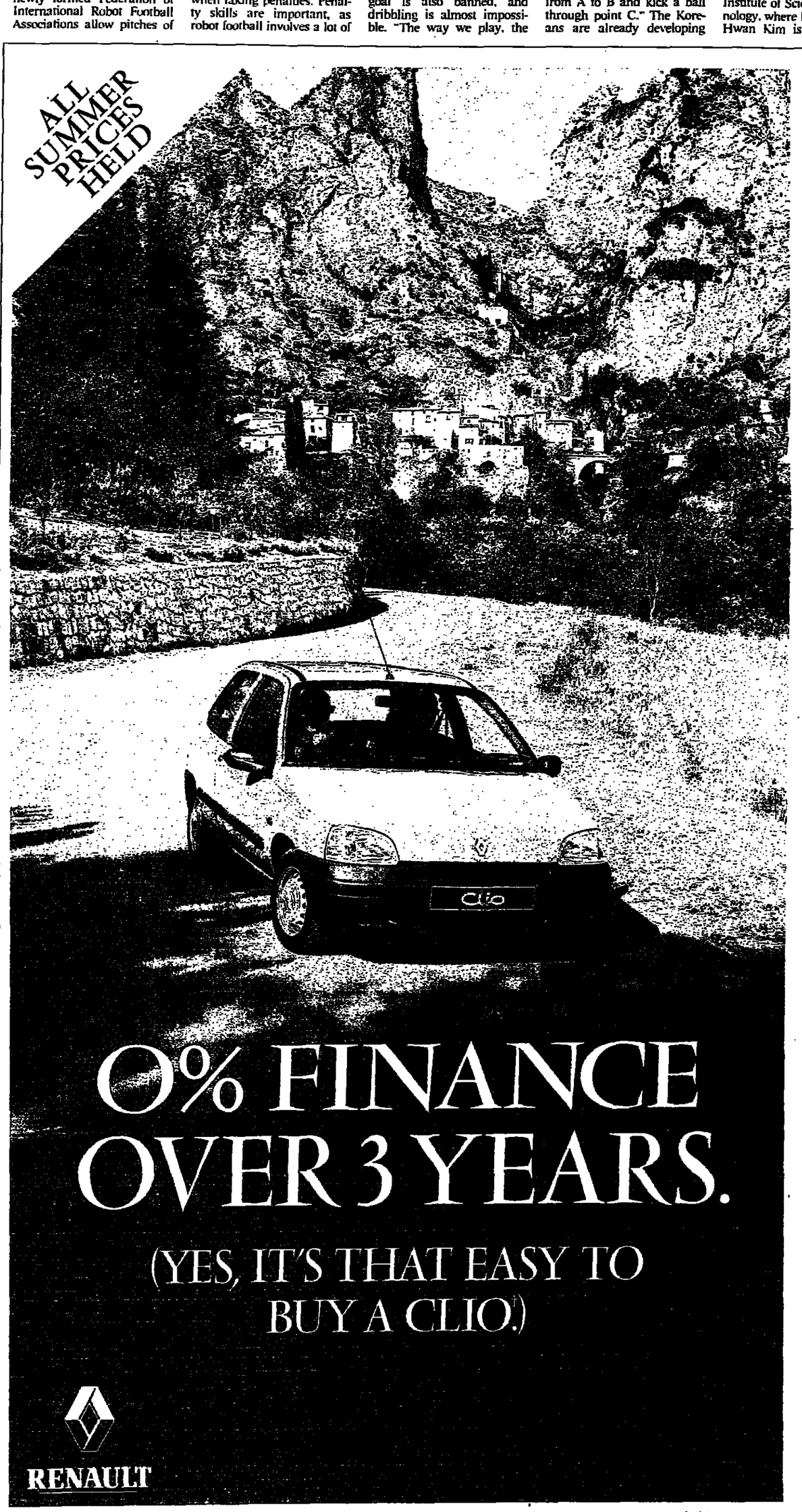
The mink escaped after vandals cut a hole in a security fence and overturned breeding pens. The animals escaped on to nearby moorland.

More than 100 fowl were killed in an attack near a crematorium in Elland and two guinea pigs died after they were savaged. One was killed outright and the other had to be put down.

Detective Inspector Martin Jordan, of Calder Valley police, said: "Members of the public should not approach these animals. They are wild and should only be handled by professionals."

Last week a man was arrested after shots were fired at animals on the farm. Two mink were killed and others were injured.

A spokesman for the farm, which keeps 18,000 animals, said he was not sure how many mink had escaped. "We are doing as much as we can to control the situation," he said.



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TYPICAL EXAMPLE	Clio RL 1.2 Dist 3-dr
Cash Price (inc. on the road costs)*	£8,240.00
Deposit	£1,648.00
Monthly Repayments	£204.54 x 36
Total Credit Price	£9,111.44**

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TYPICAL EXAMPLE	Clio RL 1.2 Dist 3-dr
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Deposit	£99.00
Monthly Repayments	£202.17 x 48
Total Credit Price	£9,903.16**

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TYPICAL EXAMPLE	Clio RL 1.2 Dist 3-dr
Cash Price (inc. on the road costs)*	£8,240.00
Deposit	£4,120.00
Monthly Repayments	£171.67 x 24
Total Credit Price	£8,240.00

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Deposit	£4,120.00
Monthly Repayments	£114.44 x 36
Total Credit Price	£8,240.00

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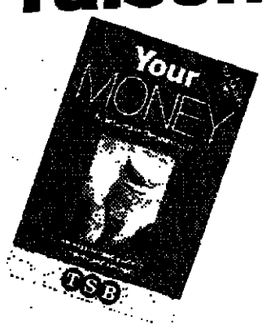
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Five pit verbal skills in Preacher of the Year final

BY RUTH GLEDHILL

FIVE preachers have been chosen from a shortlist of 30 to go forward to the final of the third *Times*/College of Preachers Preacher of the Year award.

The three men and two women are all Anglicans. Four are ordained and just one is a lay preacher or reader. They will preach on holiness at a service at 2pm at Durham Cathedral on November 12, where entry is open to all. Their sermons will be assessed by a panel chaired by the broadcaster Joan Bakewell, and which will include the finalists from last year.

This year's finalists were picked from more than 300 entries by a panel from the College of Preachers, who assessed the original entries and then visited the 30 shortlisted preachers to hear them in their home parishes.

The shortlisted sermons will be published in *The Times Best Sermons for 1998* (Mowbray). The winning preacher will receive a £1,000 bronze of a dove by the sculptor Ros Stracey.



THE REV NEVILLE MANNING, 56, is Rector of St Leonard's, Denton, in East Sussex. "I see preaching as a pastoral activity. It is part of wanting to share things with people, to feed them and nurture them." He spends a week working on each sermon and commits them to memory.



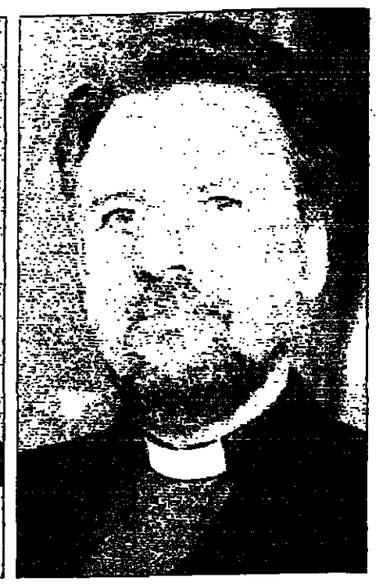
GILL GREEN, 56, a retired teacher and a reader in the Church of England, attends St Peter's, a medieval church at Ousden near Newmarket, Suffolk. "Preaching is like telling people something they already know, but putting it in a different light. I do not like being in the pulpit. I prefer to walk around a bit."



THE REV PAUL WALKER, 34, is priest-in-charge of St Wilfrid's, Moorside, Sunderland, a new church which meets in a school. He became a Christian after trying "everything" as a teenager. "I found myself one day reading the Bible, something I had never done. I found the figure of Jesus remarkably appealing."



THE REV SALLY CHAPMAN, 42, is a team vicar in Short Heath, Willenhall, West Midlands. "I try to pick up on things that are current and relate to them. I like the opportunity to share part of my own experience and what I feel the Church is experiencing, then relating that to our experience as a community."



THE REV HARRY POTTER, 42, is a barrister who also serves as an honorary curate at St Giles, Camberwell, South London. "I found many years ago that, if I did a great deal or very little preparation for a sermon, it made no material difference whatsoever in terms of the quality of the sermon."

Christmas arrives early for church advertising drive

BY RUTH GLEDHILL, RELIGION CORRESPONDENT

WITH only 98 shopping days to go before Christmas, the country's churches yesterday launched a seasonal advertising campaign which marks a return to a traditional message of the value of churchgoing.

In a tongue-in-cheek attempt to claim copyright ownership on the concept of Christmas, the posters and other literature feature the copyright symbol on the word Christmas.

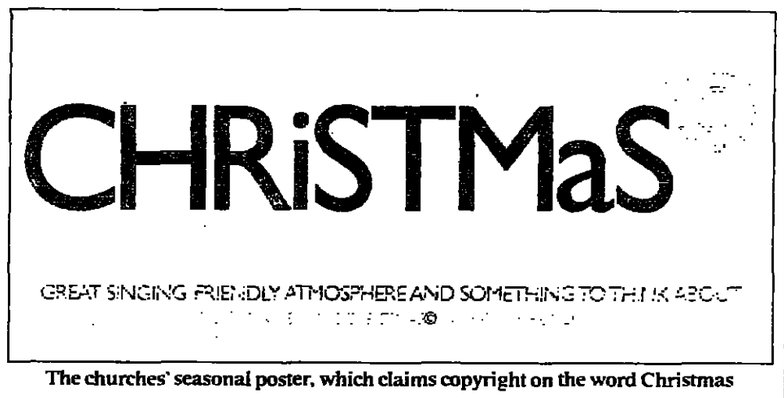
Heading a campaign that would cost £250,000 if 90 per cent of the work and space were not being donated free, the churches' advertising network is to cover billboards nationwide with brightly coloured posters promoting churchgoing this Christmas. Churches of all denominations are being urged to buy A4-sized posters for their church noticeboards to pay for the remaining £25,000 of the campaign.

The campaign represents a departure from the controversial style that brought strong criticism of last year's Christmas campaign, which used the slogan "Bad Hair Day" and featured drawings of three cartoon Magi.

This year's Easter advertising campaign was also unsuccessful and had to be withdrawn after the network ran into difficulties over whether it was entitled to use a phrase borrowed from the *X-Files*. The latest posters promise "great singing, friendly atmosphere and something to think about" in church this Christmas. They also claim that Christmas cannot be genuine without going to church.

In an attempt to reclaim the Christmas message for the Christian Churches, the network has placed the copyright symbol © next to the word Christmas. The network defended its use of copyright law in this case, even though in legal terms a single word cannot be copyrighted, and in any case copyright expires 70 years after an author's death.

John Griffiths, of the network, who was involved in the Bad Hair Day campaign and who works for a London advertising agency, said: "Copyright on Christmas has not expired because God is not dead. We are taking out copyright on Christmas in the name of Christ, who is still alive."



The churches' seasonal poster, which claims copyright on the word Christmas

The advertisement was created by four advertising executives, including Nick Drummond, of M & C Saatchi, who worked on the "demon eyes" poster for the Conservative Party, which attacked Tony Blair. The churches campaign has been restricted to the use of words rather than pictures in an attempt to keep costs down.

Mr Griffiths said: "For many years, Christmas has been too commercialised. A marker needs to be put down so that the preciousness of Christmas is preserved. In an attempt to do this in a creative and attention-grabbing way, we have decided to copyright Christmas."

The Rev Tom Ambrose, director of communications in the diocese of Ely, said: "The law of copyright protects the product of someone's skill, creativity, labour and time. We reckon that just about sums up God's input into Christmas and, as His representatives, we are laying claim to that right.

"Christmas has been hijacked in the high street and we want to let people know that much of what they are getting in December is not the real thing. If they want a genuine Christmas, then church is the best place for experiencing it."

The posters will appear in December and be reinforced by a radio commercial.

'Baughen again' Christians keep it in the family

WHEN the congregation of St James's, Clerkenwell, intones the familiar words "In the name of the Father and of the Son", they are likely to have more on their minds than God alone, because the church is about to receive an unusual father and son ministry (Ruth Gledhill writes).

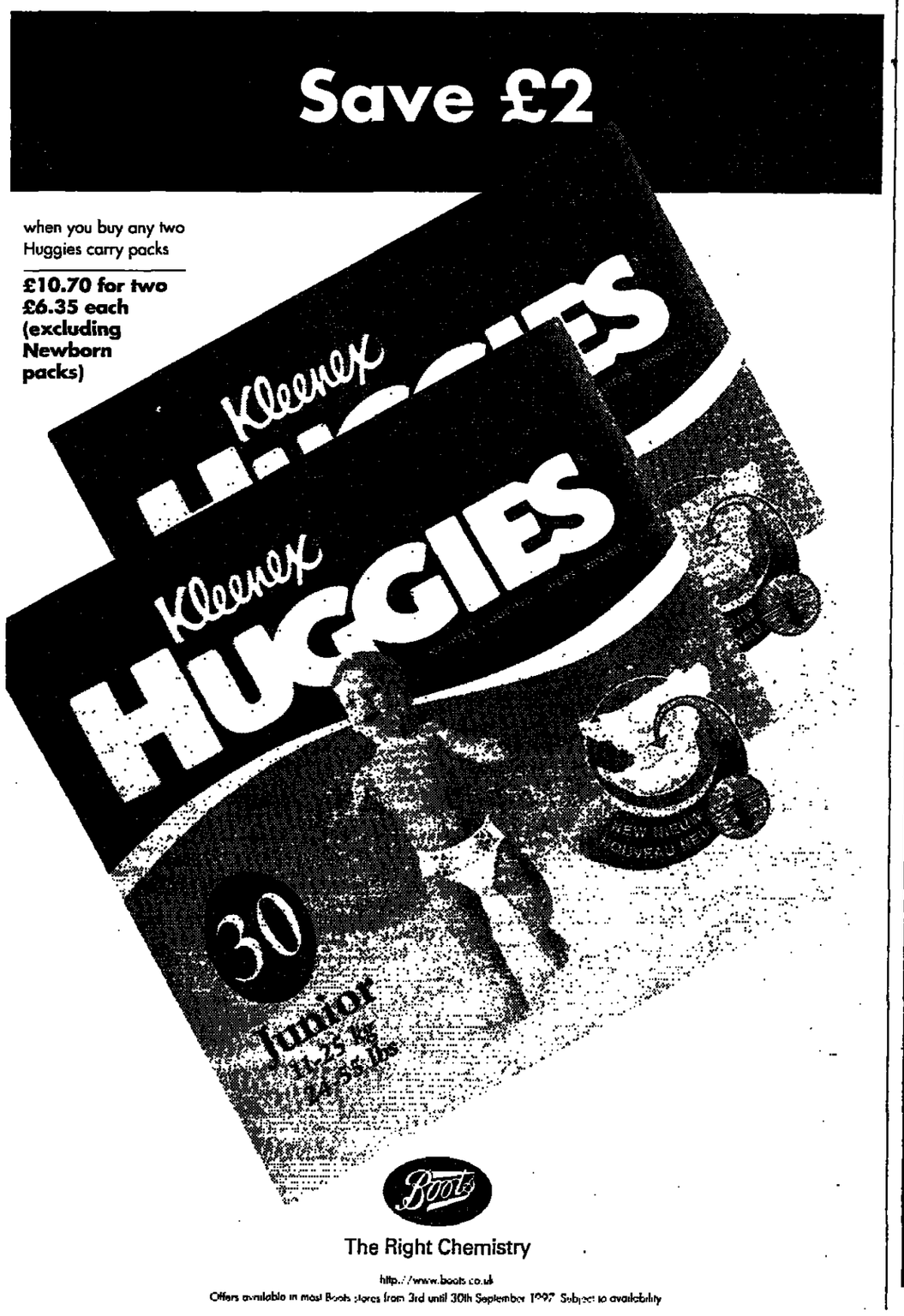
The Right Rev Michael Baughen, 67, former Bishop of Chester, will on Monday be licensed as priest-in-charge of the inner London parish. At the same service, his son, Andrew, 33, will be licensed as a priest in the parish.

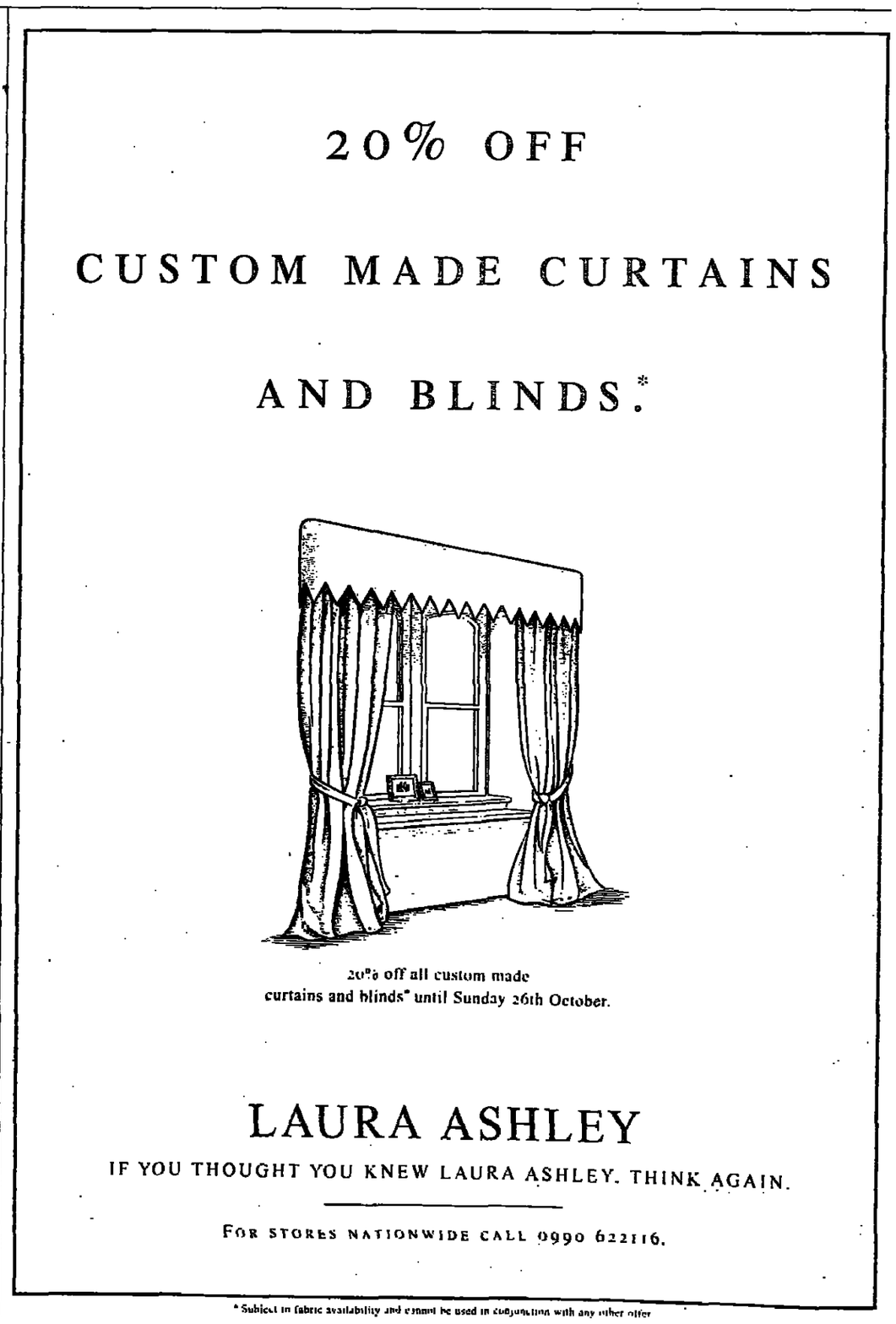
Andrew, who is married with two daughters, said he has admired his father from his days as vicar of All Souls', Langham Place — Central London's leading evangelical church. He said that he and his father had different gifts to offer: "I am incredibly proud of my dad. I will really enjoy having him around."

Although his father will not be paid, he intends to be present at the church for as many Sundays as possible, and they will share the preaching and strategy development. Bishop Baughen said: "It will be wonderful to work with my son. He has got tremendous gifts and it is a great delight to be able to learn from him."

St James's, which has a congregation of 30, has been without a priest for 14 months. Andrew is moving from a curacy at St Mark's, Battersea Rise, a South London evangelical church with a congregation of 300.

Proposed changes include a Sunday morning service staged like a film set and an evening service in discussion format.





Briton is deported over Burma protest

Student's mother says, 'I could have boxed his ears' after demonstration ends in arrest, writes **Emma Wilkins**

A BRITISH student who was arrested after staging a one-man protest against the military regime in Burma was deported yesterday as his mother admitted: "I felt like boxing his ears."

James Mawdsley, 24, who spent two nights imprisoned in Rangoon, was escorted by Burmese security police on to a flight to Bangkok, where he plans to stay with friends. Mr Mawdsley was arrested on Monday after handcuffing himself to railings outside a school in Rangoon, chanting pro-democracy slogans and spraying a wall with the Burmese word *metta*, which means love and kindness.

His mother, Diana, a nurse who lives in Durham, said she was delighted that he was safe. "When I heard about what had happened I felt like boxing his ears, I must confess. But that was tempered with the desire to give him a hug.

"He is very passionate about the plight faced by the people of Burma. He is not some crazy boy running around doing things off the cuff."

Mr Mawdsley was interrogated for eight hours by security officers and gave only his name and nationality. He refused to discuss the reasons for his protest, talking only about his family, according to Mrs Mawdsley, who spoke to him by telephone yesterday.

"He's watched enough old war films to know how to deflect the anger of the interviewers," Mrs Mawdsley said. "I think he's on a bit of a high at the moment — although he knows he will never be able to go back to Burma, which is a shame."

Mr Mawdsley had been living in the jungle on the border of Thailand and Burma since February, helping to teach English to local children.

His father, David, a property manager who lives in Kensington, West London, said: "James deliberately set up the protest and thought it through very carefully." Mr Mawdsley, who is divorced from James's mother, said it was the first time his son had become actively involved in human rights issues. "He has never done anything like this sort of protest before. I am rather proud of him."

His sister, Emma, 26, a geography lecturer at Durham University, discussed the planned protest when her brother visited her earlier this year. "He really thought this through with me before he decided to go ahead with it. His intention was not really to be arrested, but he knew it was a risk and he was prepared to take it."

Earlier this year Mr Mawdsley visited students in British universities to talk about the political situation in Burma. His protest marked the ninth anniversary of the suppression of the pro-democracy movement in the country. The military regime ignored the results of democratic elections and quashed a popular uprising. Thousands of people were killed.

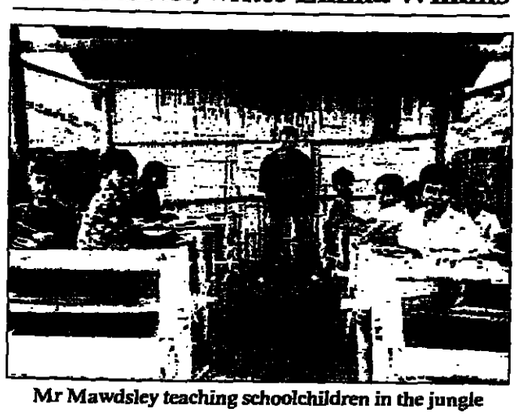
Mr Mawdsley, who went to Scarisbrick Hall, an independent school near Ormskirk, Lancashire, passed five A levels despite a life-threatening kidney tumour which confined him to a hospital bed for seven months when he was 17.

He read physics and philosophy for a year at Bristol before abandoning his studies to travel to New Zealand and Australia. He holds dual British and Australian nationality as his mother is Australian.

His twin brother, Jeremy, is a lieutenant in the Royal Artillery who has served in Bosnia and Northern Ireland. He has one other brother, Jonathan, 25.

After his release, Mr Mawdsley was interviewed by the British Ambassador to Burma, who ensured that he had been well treated while in prison.

"He appeared to be none the worse for having spent two nights in custody," a Foreign Office spokesman said.



Mr Mawdsley teaching schoolchildren in the jungle



James Mawdsley, who was arrested after shouting pro-democracy slogans

Grieving son gave poison to stepfather

BY A STAFF REPORTER

A MOTHER'S death from cancer left her husband and son divided by grief, a court was told. Her husband never talked about her death, and her son felt it was all too much to bear when the family home was put up for sale.

Anthony Russell, 20, was so upset that he laced his stepfather's rum with sulphuric acid. It caused no lasting harm and was a way of crying for help, Northampton Crown Court heard yesterday as Russell was sent to a young offenders' institute for six months for administering poison.

Russell and his elder brother, Ian, had helped their stepfather, Nigel Russell, to nurse their mother through her long illness. Afterwards, the stepfather never discussed their grief and did not share £45,000 from life insurance with the two sons.

A year later, Anthony Russell saw a "For Sale" sign outside their £80,000 house, and his stepfather told him to find somewhere else to live. Ben Maguire, for the son, said that tipping the acid into the bottle of dark rum was "a cry for help — he felt let down".

His stepfather, a 45-year-old gas fitter, took a sip and spat it out when he felt a burning sensation. Mr Russell said: "Anthony was not working. He was sitting at home doing nothing. I could not manage the house on my own. There were so many memories of my wife. I did not want to stay."

Robots drive away petrol station staff

BY KEVIN EASON, MOTORING EDITOR

THE first automated filling station in Britain heralds an age when motorists might never again see a human petrol attendant. After the hole-in-the-wall cash machine comes the filling station with pumps but nobody to pay.

The forecourt outside the Waitrose store in Newark, Nottinghamshire, is in stark contrast to motoring's halcyon times when an attendant pumped the petrol into the car, wiped the windscreen and then took the cash into a little office cluttered with oil cans and a fading girlie calendar.

Now motorists buy a charge card in the store in multiples of £5 or use a credit card to swipe at the pump. They simply drive in, swipe the card — which gets an automatic credit check — pump in the petrol, collect a receipt and drive out again.

Nearly 150 miles away in an office at Kuwait Petroleum in Staines, West London, operators monitor the petrol station by computer. They can tell when new supplies of fuel are needed or if maintenance should be carried out. Motorists baffled by the technology have been few and far between, although store staff say that some have turned up clutching cash wondering how they could pay.

Shell is also testing a fully robotic station which will mean motorists do not even have to get out of the car. A robot will pump the petrol while a machine asks for payment at the driver's window. Shell is watching results from a robot forecourt in Sacramento, California, to find out if it would work here.

When the motorist drives in, a red light signals when to stop while a windscreen transmitter tells the robot the make and age of car so it knows where to look for the petrol cap. The robot's arm unscrews the cap, and inserts the nozzle which forms an airtight seal so that fuel can be pumped at four times the normal rate. An automated teller swings up to the driver's window to take a charge or credit card.

When the fuel is in, the robot screws the cap back on and the light changes to green to signal that the transaction is completed. So far, tests have worked well — though the robot has been baffled by drivers of Aston Martins, Rolls-Royces and Jaguars because their filler caps are in unconventional places. Some Jaguars have two filler caps.

The opening of Britain's first self-service forecourt at Southwark Bridge in London 26 years ago ushered in an age when motorists had to get out of their cars to fill up. Robot attendants might mean they can relax in the driving seat once again.

PETROL'S CHEQUERED HISTORY

- **The word petrol was made up by Frederick Simms, a motoring pioneer, to allay fears about the volatility of motor spirit. He decided people could not complain about petrol because they did not know what it was.**
- **The first drive-in filling station was opened in Detroit, USA, in 1910.**
- **Leaded petrol was introduced in 1921 to make engines run more smoothly and reduce mechanical wear.**
- **Widespread use of unleaded petrol in Britain grew as laws demanded that all new cars on sale from 1993 be fitted with catalytic converters, designed to cut exhaust emissions by 90 per cent.**
- **A recreation of a garage from the 1930s at the National Motor Museum at Beaulieu, Hampshire, stirs memories of names once familiar on pumps, such as Coalene, Redline and National Benzole.**

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AEG Gas Hob AEG1119/2G Mocca/White Was £159.99 £134.99

AEG 60cm Cooker Hood AEG2115/2S Mocca/White Was £89.99 £64.99

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* FOR EXAMPLE THE ABOVE COMPLETE KITCHEN COMPRISES:8 CABINETS: 1000mm Hi-Line Base Unit x 3, 1000mm Full Height Wall Unit x 2, 600mm Built Under Oven Housing Unit, 600mm Hob Wall Unit, 600mm 3 Drawer Base Unit. ACCESSORIES: Stainless Steel Lay-on-Sink (SINSC1X2), Waste and Overflow, Pillar Taps (CAP 1100), Worktops 38mm x 3m x 1, Worktop 30mm x 1m x 1, Continuous Plinth x 2, Return Plinth x 4. APPLIANCES: QA Appliance package (AAH 811/2) Comprises: Electric Oven, Mocca or White (APM 3110/2G), Gas Hob, Mocca or White; (APM 1110/2G), Extractor, Mocca or White (APM 2111/2I), Washer/Dryer (ATB872S). PRICE INFORMATION: Offers and prices are for aged units and are for cabinets, appliances and accessories as listed. Cornice/pelmet rails, decor panels/ends etc. are available as optional extras. A delivery charge will apply to products purchased from temporary showrooms while stores are being refurbished. All items subject to availability.

Storm over safety in Africa's skies

R. W. Johnson reports on pilots' fears after mid-air collision

THE mid-air collision of two military planes — a German Tupolev Tu154 and an American C141 Starlifter — off the Angolan coast, with the loss of 33 lives, has again dramatised the anxieties of civil airline pilots over the parlous state of air traffic safety procedures over much of Africa.

There seems little doubt these procedures were again deficient on this occasion, for it seems likely the two aircraft were never told of their nearness to each other or even that they were on the same flight path. That this was not known for certain three days after the crash highlights the problem.

Ordinarily there would be a full record of all air traffic control communications on tape, allowing an immediate and definitive confirmation as to whether such routine information was given. In this case there was a delay of 24 hours before the disappearance of the planes was announced by the two air forces after both had spent many fruitless hours trying to establish their planes' whereabouts from various African countries. Volker Rühe, the German Defence Minister, made no bones about where he felt the blame lies. "Air safety in Africa has to be improved," he told a press conference. "Our military transport planes have never had an accident in 40 years. There were no safety deficits on our part."

Aviation safety in Africa is bound to be a key issue when the International Federation of Airline Pilots' Associations meets in Ghana this week, because both it and especially its South African chapter, Alpa-SA, have spoken repeatedly about the dangerous neglect of air safety procedures, particularly in the western part of the continent. This time it seems likely the Angolan authorities may be at fault.

In July, Alpa-SA said that last year Angolan air traffic controllers had reported 12 near-misses in their airspace. Aviation sources say many such incidents go unreported and the real figure is likely to be far higher, particularly when the number of non-IATA (International Air Transport Association) planes in the air over the continent is taken into account.

The problem, according to the international pilots' federation, is that the overflight fees paid by airlines, about £4,000 for each Johannesburg to Europe flight, are pocketed by African countries which do not spend it on training or equipment as they are supposed to. So desperate have South African Airways pilots become about the virtual non-existence over Africa of the radar, waypoints, beacons, airfield safety facilities and air traffic control communications prescribed by the International Civil Aviation Organisation that there has recently been talk of its aircraft again flying round the bulge of Africa, as it did in apartheid days when sanctions forced such a route.

The problem is that International Civil Aviation Organisation standards are not compulsory, a fact that has caused some airlines to threaten the withholding of overflight fees or, in the case of South African Airways, to offer to pay the fees in kind by installing the necessary equipment in countries that lack it.

The only other means of pressure available would seem to be the expulsion of African countries from the International Civil Aviation Organisation or their airlines from IATA.

In practice, airlines are reacting to the danger by installing more and more anti-collision equipment and radars on board planes, although pilots say that reliance on such in-plane equipment is analogous to road safety being regulated by car horns rather than traffic lights, white lines, cats' eyes and highway codes.

Leading article, page 23

HIDAJET DELIC AP



Two survivors of the UN helicopter crash in central Bosnia on their way to a Nato military hospital in Sarajevo. Twelve people perished in the accident

Crash in fog kills 12 on UN helicopter

FROM TOM WALKER IN BELGRADE

THE international community's second most senior negotiator in Bosnia was killed yesterday, along with 11 others, in a helicopter crash in the centre of the country. A Briton was reported among the dead.

Gerd Wagner, 55, a German diplomat with extensive Balkan experience, was deputy to Carlos Westendorp, the High Representative. He took up the post in July.

Diplomats said Charles Morpeth, the Briton killed, had served as an army liaison officer in the Foreign Office before transferring to the Office of the High Representative in Bosnia at the start of the year. He had recently married, they said.

The United Nations in Sarajevo confirmed yesterday afternoon that a Russian-made Mi6-HIP transport helicopter carrying Herr Wagner and other senior personnel had crashed 30 miles northwest of Sarajevo in the Fojnica mountain range. The helicopter, leased to the UN, had four Ukrainian crew.

Speaking at a news conference in Bonn, Klaus Kinkel, the German Foreign Minister, said a total of five Germans were killed in the accident, five Americans, a Briton and a Pole. "We are deeply affected by this tragic accident," he said.

The Ukrainians, including the pilot, were believed to be the only survivors of the crash, he added.

Herr Kinkel said the helicopter hit a mountain after emerging from a fog bank. It had taken off from Sarajevo in good weather conditions at about 9.15am but had then run into thick fog. "The pilot ran into the fog bank, came out of it, and then immediately flew into a cliff," the minister said.

Fighter accidents halt training flights

FROM TOM RHODES IN WASHINGTON

THE Pentagon last night ordered a 24-hour halt to all military training flights after the night-time collision of two F16 fighter jets above the Altantic Ocean, the fifth crash involving US military aircraft in as many days.

In a directive issued by William Cohen, the US Defence Secretary, the heads of the US Army, Air Force, Navy and Marine Corps were instructed to ground training sorties for the duration of a swift safety review. Operational flights would continue, Mr Cohen said. The orders came after an accident late on Tuesday night when the two fighters, carrying pilots training for night-time flying, collided just minutes after take-off from the local National Guard base. Two men were forced to parachute into the ocean and a third to nurse his crippled plane back to land. All three pilots were safe yesterday.

The incident came seven months after another mishap involving two F16s from the 177th Fighter Wing in which the jets tailed a civilian aircraft so closely that the passenger plane took emergency evasive action. This week, however, has seen a spate of accidents. On Monday, a Marine FA18 Hornet fighter crashed off the North Carolina coast, killing both pilots.

A Navy FA18 fighter crashed in Oman on Sunday. The pilot also died. On the same day, an F117A Stealth fighter plunged to the ground during an airshow in Maryland. Its pilot ejected safely.

Details remain sketchy of a crash on Saturday in which a C141 Starfighter cargo plane is thought to have collided with a German military aircraft off the coast of Africa. Of the 33 people feared killed, nine were Americans.

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REWARDING TIMES

PLAY PORTFOLIO £200,000 TO BE WON

£2,000 TO BE WON TODAY — TURN TO THE EQUITY PAGE 33

This week we launch new Portfolio, an exciting opportunity to play the stock market without getting your fingers burnt. You can win £2,000 a day six days a week in *The Times*, and you can play every Sunday in *The Sunday Times* to win £5,000. Better still, there is a £10,000 weekly prize, if you play Portfolio in both papers, seven days a week. Your gamecard was inserted in Tuesday's *Times* and another will be inserted on Monday, September 22. Playing Portfolio is easy and fun. Every week companies' share prices go up and down in the real world of the Stock Exchange. So you can experience the excitement of the stock market swings, but without taking any risks.



Yesterday's winner, Mr Richard Boyes, 37, a civil servant, of Enfield, Middx, won £2,000.

HOW TO PLAY

- On each individual Portfolio gamecard there are eight numbers printed in a grid. (See example, above)
- These numbers represent eight out of 44 companies listed on the Portfolio panel (see Equity Prices, page 33).
- The eight are your "Portfolio of Shares".
- The 44 companies are taken from the hundreds whose shares are listed on *The Times* Equity Prices page every day.
- Simply check the share price movement (+ or -) of your eight Portfolio shares.
- When you have checked all eight share movements and entered them on to the Portfolio panel on page 33, add them up to obtain your plus or minus total.
- When adding up your total, ignore fractions, ie enter 16½ as 16 (the symbol ... equals no change).
- If your overall total exactly matches the points required in the daily Portfolio Dividend, printed on the Portfolio panel on page 33, you win or share the £2,000 daily prize.

WEEKLY ACCUMULATOR GAME

The weekly accumulator game starts in *The Times* on Monday, September 22. To play the weekly accumulator game you simply add up your daily Portfolio totals, Monday to Sunday. If your accumulator total matches exactly the weekly portfolio accumulator dividend, published in the *The Sunday Times*, you win or share the weekly accumulator prize of £10,000.

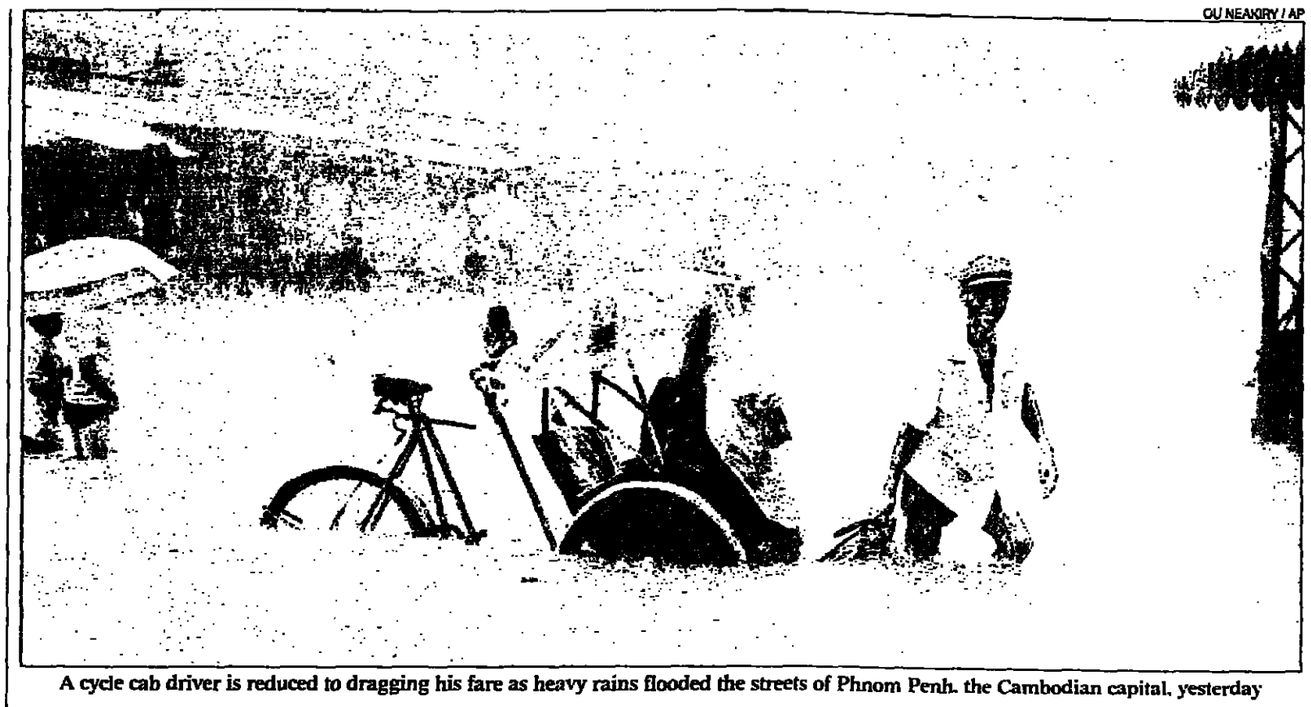
HOW TO CLAIM YOUR PRIZE

Claims for *The Times* daily Portfolio dividend must be made to the Portfolio claims line on 0171-481 3388 between 9.30am and 3pm today. No claims can be accepted outside these hours and you must claim your prize the day you win. You must have your card with you when you claim. Other persons can claim on your behalf provided they have your card. No responsibility can be accepted for failure to contact the claims office for any reason within the stated hours. In the event of more than one valid claim for any prize, that prize will be divided equally among the winners.

*You can get a Portfolio card by calling the card request line on 0171-481 3355 during normal office hours. There will be another gamecard in *The Times* on Monday, September 22, and cards are also available at selected newsagents.

THE TIMES

Soldiers in drag battle for Congo capital


GU NEAKRY / AP

A cycle cab driver is reduced to dragging his fare as heavy rains flooded the streets of Phnom Penh, the Cambodian capital, yesterday

FROM SAM KILEY IN KINSHASA

HELICOPTERS strafed the already shattered streets of Brazzaville yesterday with rockets and cannon fire as fighting between government troops and militias in drag escalated in a final push for control of the city.

After the helicopters made leisurely sorties across Brazzaville killing inhabitants too old or ill to flee with other civilians, witnesses across the Congo River saw one aircraft hit and plunge to the ground in a plume of black smoke.

Aid workers said that the troops had copied images from the Liberian civil war and had started to dress up in looted wigs and women's clothing, with garish make-up. One foreigner who left the city recently said he had been held up at a roadblock by a militiaman "in full Father Christmas kit — including a long white beard".

Brazzaville's largely forgotten war is between forces of President Lissouba and the former President, Major-General Denis Sassou-Nguesso, leader of the "Cobra" militia, which has claimed thousands of lives and driven hundreds of thousands from their homes since June. The conflict has escalated since another militia leader, Bernard Kolelas, the Mayor of Brazzaville, joined forces with the Government this week, dragging his Bakongo district into a maelstrom which locals said was "getting madder by the day".

The only sources of aid to Brazzaville's residents have been the International Committee of the Red Cross and Médecins sans Frontiéres. Their officials said there was not a major humanitarian crisis yet, as most civilians had fled to their home areas. But food supplies are expected to be exhausted with the approach of the rainy season.

More damaging has been the collapse of order among young fighters. The "militias" metamorphosis into voodoo armies beyond the control of their officers further undermined attempts to broker a peace agreement between the rival politicians who ignored a ceasefire plea from regional leaders to unleash three days of artillery bombardments.

Nearby Kinshasa has become used to the background sound of artillery. Many residents of the capital of the former Zaire peer across the river and compare the skills of the gunners on the two sides.

The shooting down of the helicopter from Mr Lissouba's army was followed by direct hits on the Nambemba Tower building, the headquarters of Elf-Aquitaine. Mr Lissouba has previously accused Elf of giving finance to General Sassou-Nguesso.

WORLD SUMMARY

Iranians shot in Pakistan

Gunmen on a motorcycle, almost certainly Sunni Muslim extremists, shot dead five Shia Iranian air-force technicians and their local driver in the Pakistani city of Rawalpindi yesterday (Christopher Thomas writes). One person was wounded.

Religious divisions pose an increasing threat to the Islamic state, whose class, political and economic conflicts mean it is a country struggling for survival.

DNA tests for 'The Fugitive'

New York: The body of Dr Sam Sheppard, whose case inspired the long-running television show *The Fugitive*, was exhumed for DNA tests in an attempt to establish that he did not kill his wife (Tunku Varadarajan writes). He was convicted in 1954 of murdering his wife, Marilyn, and spent a decade in jail before winning his freedom in a retrial. He died in 1970.

Free French war hero dies

Paris: The Allies lost one of their most courageous war heroes this week. French Brigadier-General Georges Bergé, a Colditz survivor and the first Allied secret agent to be parachuted into Nazi-occupied France as part of de Gaulle's Free French forces, died on Sunday in France at the age of 88. (Susan Bell writes)

Troops patrol riots capital

Jakarta: Soldiers and police patrolled the South Sulawesi capital of Ujung Pandang, still hit by sporadic violence on the third day of anti-Chinese unrest in which at least six people have died, residents said. "Mobs are still pelting houses and shops," one said by phone. *(AFP)*

Swiss miffed at howl in wall

Geneva: Residents of the Swiss village of Bernex, on the outskirts of Geneva near the French border, asked authorities to have an automated cash dispenser removed because of noise, claiming overuse by non-residents. *(Reuters)*

Kabila clash with UN threatens foreign aid

LAURENT KABILA, President of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, was set yesterday for a clash with Kofi Annan over his refusal to allow United Nations investigations into widespread allegations of massacres (Sam Kiley writes). The clash could jeopardise badly needed foreign funding for the country.

Mr Annan, the UN Secretary-General, is expected to pull a team of 24 investigators out of the former Zaire this week if the Congolese President refuses to allow them to deploy without "minders".

Mr Kabila, who took power with the help of Tutsi soldiers from Rwanda who continue to dominate his army, is anxious to preserve good relations with his eastern neighbour, whose troops are alleged to have slaughtered thousands of Hutu refugees. Reliant on the Tutsi fighters to keep him in power, he looked determined this week to sacrifice foreign support which is likely to be cut drastically if the UN investigation is closed.

"The backlash would be disastrous for the Congo," a European ambassador said.

Sherry barons staggered by 'hangover-free' fino

FROM GILES TREMLETT IN MADRID

SORE-HEADED Spanish sherry producers are reeling from the appearance of what its inventor claims is the world's first hangover-free fino.

José Estévez's Tio Mateo fino should have encouraged citizens of Jerez de la Frontera to drink all night and dance all day. Instead it has produced one of the biggest headaches in the town's history.

The aristocratic families who run most of the town's centuries-old sherry bodegas say the claims being made for the hangover-free upstart are grossly exaggerated. They refuse to accept the implication that ordinary sherry can be anything but good for you.

The town's Sherry Council has refused Señor Estévez permission to advertise the special properties of Tio Mateo on the bottle labels.

Señor Estévez says the secret to his fino's hangover-reducing properties lies in its low histamine levels. Histamine is blamed for many of the worst effects of hangovers, producing violent headaches, diarrhoea and even provoking asthma and allergy attacks.

A self-made millionaire, Señor Estévez has ploughed a large part of his fortune into the bodega he bought 20 years ago. But he says the old families have turned their backs on him. He blames his background as the son of a local labourer who quarried sand for wine bottles. "It is the old boy network that counts here," he said.

Señor Estévez claims his attempts to convert his fellow townsmen to the new fino are also being blocked by multinational drinks companies afraid of his success. "I have been the David to the Goliath of the multinationals," he says.

Six years of work with Germany's Underberg winery, which also produces low histamine wines, has allowed him to perfect a technique for ridding sherry of the potentially damaging substance. Ordinary sherry contains up to 11mg per litre. Tio Mateo has less than 0.02mg.

But the Sherry Council refuses to recognise that low histamine necessarily makes a drink less liable to produce a hangover. It says histamine levels are even higher in many foodstuffs, such as cheese, strawberries and yoghurt. "Scientific opinion differs," sniffs one rival. "What really matters is the amount of the stuff you drink."

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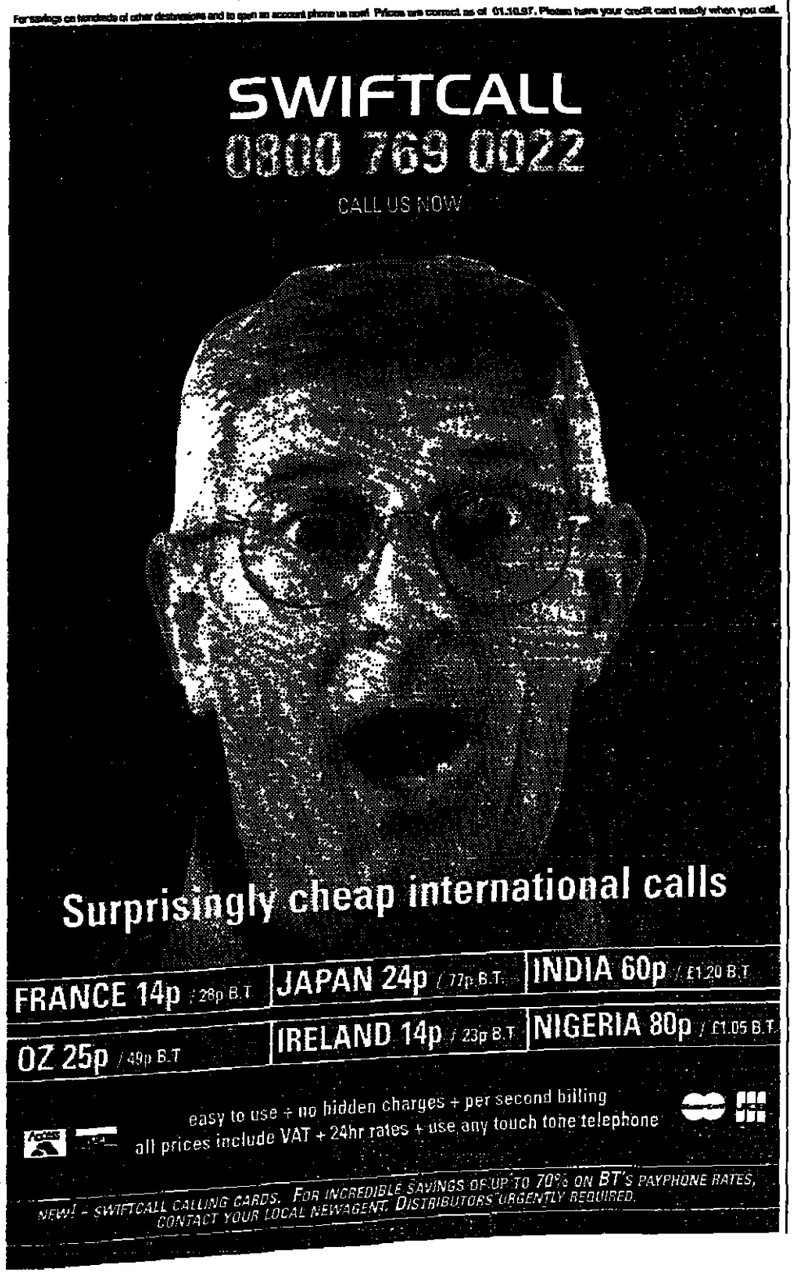
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America rejects global ban on landmines

The defence of South Korea is sticking point, write Michael Binyon and Tom Rhodes

AMERICA refused to sign an international treaty banning landmines agreed by 89 nations in Oslo yesterday. Eric Newsom, head of the American delegation, said the conference had refused to accept an American compromise formula that met Washington's security concerns.

He hailed the completion of the Canadian-sponsored treaty banning the use, storage or manufacture of all anti-personnel mines, and said it was a "significant accomplishment". But it would have been a much stronger treaty had the negotiators taken steps so that the US could have joined.

President Clinton, attempting to limit criticism of his rejection of a global landmine treaty, last night announced a series of unilateral measures by America designed to show its commitment to a worldwide moratorium. Speaking in the Oval Office, he said America could not sign up to a draft treaty that did not accept the unique responsibilities of the world's only superpower.

"Unfortunately, as it is drafted I cannot, in good conscience, add America's name to that treaty," Mr Clinton said. "There is a line I simply cannot cross which is the safety and security of our men and women in uniform. But America will continue to take the lead in ending the use of landmines."

The sticking point was America's demand to be allowed to keep mines deployed along South Korea's border with North Korea. The Pentagon has argued forcefully that, with the unstable situation in the Communist North and hundreds of thousands of North Korean troops deployed very close to the border, removal of the mines would increase the risk of invasion.

America demanded a nine-year exemption for Korea, and also wanted to keep "smart" anti-personnel mines that self-destruct so that they could be deployed to protect anti-tank mines. It also wanted countries to be allowed to withdraw from the treaty, after six months' notice.

Swayed by the forceful rejection of these arguments by Lloyd Axworthy, the Canadian Foreign Minister and instigator of the Ottawa Process on landmines, delegates rejected the American proposals. They argued that other countries would argue for similar exemptions.

America initially refused to take part in the Ottawa Process, but then relented in response to world opinion. The campaign for a ban, powerfully boosted by Diana, Princess of Wales, led President Clinton to accept the principle. But over the past two weeks the Americans have twice changed their minds on whether they would accept a total ban. They have until December to sign. Mr Newsom said America would announce its final position in the next day or so.

Mr Clinton said he had directed the Pentagon to develop alternatives by 2003 and that landmines would be withdrawn from the demilitarised zone between the two Koreas three years later.

Appointing a former senior military official as his personal adviser on the issue, Mr Clinton also pledged $68 million (£42.5 million) towards demining efforts throughout the world, starting in Chad, Zimbabwe and Lebanon, and urged a 25 per cent increase in that figure starting next year.

Neither Russia nor China was present in Oslo, although Moscow has already declared a moratorium on the sale and use of mines. China is the main manufacturer of the cheap mines increasingly used by insurgents and guerrillas in the Third World. It is estimated that every year they kill or maim 26,000 people.

Under the terms of the treaty, each country must destroy all stockpiles by 2005, including all mines deployed on its territory. In theory Britain must remove all mines laid by the Argentinians in the Falklands, though this would depend on improving clearance technology in boggy land. In December, Canada will launch the second stage of the Ottawa Process, which will deal with verification, mine-clearing technology and Western help for war-torn countries where reconstruction and agriculture must wait until the land has been cleared of mines.

JOHN HAYES / AP



Governor Pete Wilson examines an M16 assault rifle yesterday with Commander Rick Dinse, centre, and Lieutenant Anthony Alba

LA gun law puts heat on robbers

Assault rifles boost police arsenal as criminals echo film violence, writes Giles Whittell in Los Angeles

LOS ANGELES has raised the stakes in America's inner-city arms race by issuing its police with 600 M16 assault rifles as a defence against the region's increasingly ruthless bank robbers, whose sense of reality, some say, has been distorted by crime films.

The weapons, designed for storming heavily armed enemy positions in time of war, will be assigned to senior patrol officers for use at their discretion, Pete Wilson, the California Governor, said yesterday.

His announcement fulfilled a promise to boost the Los Angeles Police Department's firepower after a shoot-out in February, in which officers were pinned down for several hours by two gunmen bristling with assault weapons who had robbed a bank.

The "battle of North Hollywood", as it was dubbed, was broadcast live on national television. It ended in the deaths of both robbers, but only after police improvised by running to a nearby gun store to borrow heavy, rapid-fire weapons.

The harrowing episode had uncanny echoes of scenes from the violent Michael Mann thriller, *Heat*.

"Never, ever again do I want to see officers from the Los Angeles Police Department outgunned," said Mr Wilson, a former Marine who made law enforcement at all costs a plank of his 1994 re-election campaign.

"Never, ever again do I want to see them having to rush to a gun shop in order to be able to equalise the firepower of the thugs." As he spoke, police were sealing off another northern Los Angeles neighbourhood after a gun battle between security guards and a carload of masked robbers had left one dead and three missing.

The violence erupted soon after the 9am opening of a Van Nuys branch of the Great Western Bank in the San Fernando Valley. The two plainclothes guards opened fire on the robbers after seeing them pull on balaclavas in a car outside the bank's rear entrance, police said.

At least 12 shots were exchanged between the guards and a man brandishing a 9mm machine pistol, who died at the scene of gunshot wounds.

In contrast to the North Hollywood robbery, in which 11 police and six civilians were wounded, no one else was injured.

The incident highlighted the escalating danger in some Californian neighbourhoods of brazen armed robberies, carried out in daylight by a grimly lethal breed of latter-day outlaw — but little emphasis was needed.

As other forms of violent crime dip, Los Angeles has become known to the FBI in recent years as the "bank robbery capital of the world". Police frequently respond to as many as four hold-ups a day, many of them in the San Fernando Valley, which forms the city's vast northern lobe and boasts several contrasting distinctions, including the world's largest car showroom, dozens of pornography studios and thousands of desirable hillside homes.

The bank targeted yesterday has been robbed twice before, in April and July last year, a spokesman said.

The gunmen killed in February's shootout were likewise veterans of the city's bank robbery industry: Larry Phillips and Emil Matasareanu were posthumously linked to two unsolved robberies, which were thought to have netted them up to $1.7 million (£1,090,000), and two armoured car hijacks which experts likened to the opening sequence of *Heat*, in which a van carrying millions of dollars is caught in a deadly ambush.

Even in the more salubrious neighbourhoods of Los Angeles, bank visits by armoured vans are now tightly choreographed events featuring grim-faced guards with drawn weapons. Every second is filmed by security cameras and passers-by are wise to pause until the van departs.

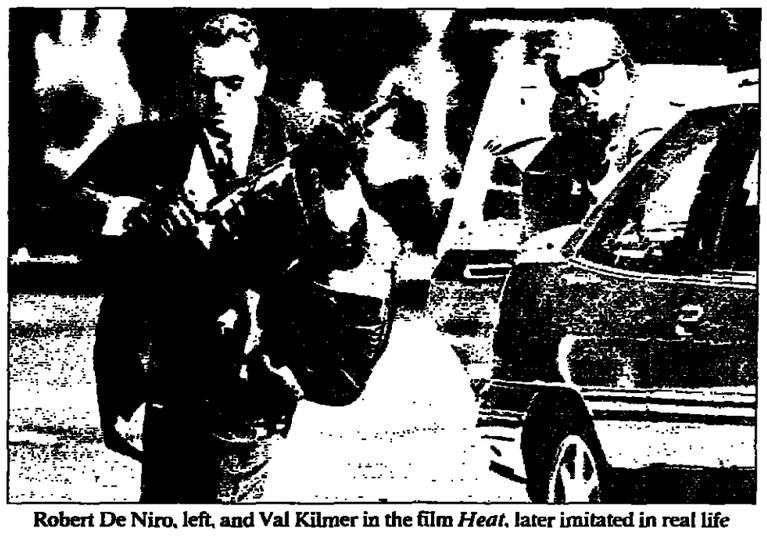
The North Hollywood shootout brought new demands from gun-control advocates as well as police.

Two Democratic state senators, including Jane Fonda's former husband, Tom Hayden, called for new laws to close loopholes in the federal ban on assault weapons.

Russian and Chinese-made AK47s, the weapons of choice of most robbers, are still easily obtained on the black market.

Designed in 1947 and for decades the Soviet Army's chief assault rifle, they are often smuggled into the US with small five-round ammunition clips, then modified to take 75-round drums.

The newer M16, properly used, will pound most AK47 users into submission. It can fire 800 rounds per minute, and is accurate to nearly half a mile.



Robert De Niro, left, and Val Kilmer in the film *Heat*, later imitated in real life

Marine who evaded Vietnam duty arrested after 30 years

FROM TOM RHODES IN WASHINGTON

ALMOST 30 years after he evaded the draft to Vietnam, a US Marine was yesterday under close arrest at a Californian army base as the Pentagon considered whether to charge him with desertion.

Randy Caudill, 48, was arrested at the northern border of Washington State as he attempted to return to Canada, his home since 1968.

A routine check by the Immigration and Naturalisation Service had found a warrant for desertion from the Marine Corps and Mr Caudill was flown to Camp Pendleton near San Diego, the base where he had trained as a radio operator before refusing the call to arms.

He was 19 at the time. The year had begun with the bloody Tet offensive, the aerial bombing of Hanoi and the siege of the Marine base at Khe Sanh. Angry anti-war protesters had taken to the streets of America and bitter divisions over the war had driven President Johnson to abandon re-election.

The United States this year sent an ambassador to Hanoi for the first time since the fall of Saigon and, perhaps most tellingly, Bill Clinton, an anti-Vietnam activist who evaded the draft, resides at the White House. But Mr Caudill nevertheless could face a maximum of five years in prison for desertion.

Although an amnesty was granted during the Carter Administration, it covered only those who had fled to Canada to avoid military service, not military personnel who had deserted. Sent on holiday before his troop was deployed to Vietnam, Mr Caudill had spent a week with his family in Ohio and then, like so many others of his generation, chose to flee to Canada.

A resident of Winnipeg, Mr Caudill is married and has three daughters and two granddaughters.

Marine Corps officials were yesterday considering what charges to press against the former soldier. "The Marine Corps takes this very seriously," said Captain Scott Lopez, an official at Pendleton.

As Vietnam was not declared a war by Congress, the prospect of the death penalty enforced for desertion in time of a conflict was not considered an option.

Clinton spurns $368bn tobacco deal with call for tougher action

BY TOM RHODES

PRESIDENT CLINTON rejected a $368.5 billion (£231 billion) tobacco settlement yesterday, concluding that the deal did not meet his ambitious goal of drastically reducing smoking among children.

Announcing his verdict on the settlement, made public in June after almost 90 days of negotiation between the tobacco industry and the attorneys-general of 40 states, Mr Clinton demanded tougher action by Congress to achieve bipartisan national tobacco legislation.

He called for sharply increased penalties on cigarette makers if they did not meet targets to reduce the number of young smokers within a decade. The President said that, if all the penalties were imposed, the price per packet of cigarettes should rise by as much as $1.50, more than double the estimated increase under the original proposal.

"This is not about money," Mr Clinton said during an Oval Office announcement. "It is about fulfilling our responsibility as parents and as responsible adults. This is about changing the behaviour of the United States." Rather than deliver a point-by-point critique of the huge deal, Mr Clinton outlined issues to be addressed by new legislation which he said would seek to resolve the industry's legal and regulatory problems.

The White House refusal to endorse the plan, initially designed to place 25 years of restrictions on smoking in exchange for well defined limits on cigarette manufacturers' liability in legal actions, effectively drained the proposal of its little remaining momentum.

It certainly removes any possibility that a deal, albeit in amended form, could come before Congress before its adjournment at the end of next month or the beginning of November. No action is expected before next year.

Apart from the increase in packet prices, Mr Clinton said that any new settlement must give the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) more power over the control of nicotine. He said the tobacco industry should be held more accountable, offered the strongest possible incentives and urged to bring a voluntary end to cigarette advertising that targeted children.

Walking a careful political tightrope, and once again promoting Vice-President Al Gore as his negotiator-in-chief, Mr Clinton said any new Bill crafted by Congress should protect farmers in the tobacco-rich Southern states.

His announcement was greeted with elation by anti-smoking forces which have been arguing with the White House that the original settlement ceded too much to the industry and did not hold makers accountable for their apparent knowledge of nicotine addiction.

Hailed by the attorneys-general as an historic achievement, the deal had contained an impressive array of anti-smoking measures, including protections against secondary smoke, severe limitations on advertising and huge payments to reimburse states for smoking-related healthcare costs.

A White House task force concluded last week, however, that the deal limited the authority of the FDA and would fail to achieve the stated goal of reducing smoking by young people by at least 30 per cent in five years and double that figure in a decade.

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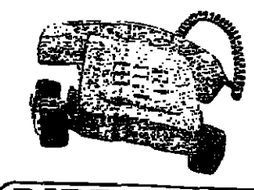
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Allegra and Daniel with their father Paul Beck, the husband of Donatella Versace, at the memorial Mass for the murdered designer in Milan in July

Versace millions go to sister's children

FROM RICHARD OWEN IN ROME

THE Italian fashion world was stunned yesterday by the revelation that Gianni Versace, the designer shot dead in Miami Beach in July, had left the bulk of his fortune to his 11-year-old niece Allegra, with his priceless collection of paintings going to his eight-year-old nephew, Daniel.

Versace's brother and sister, Santo and Donatella, who were his business partners and have run the empire since his death, receive nothing. His lifetime friend and companion Antonio D'Amico, who was in Miami with Versace when the designer was murdered by Andrew Cunanan, receives £20,000 a month and the right to live in any of Versace's magnificent mansions in Miami, New York and Milan.

Control of the fashion house will rest with Versace's brother and sister, and they will manage the shares the designer bequeathed to his niece, the company said in a statement issued in Milan. It added that Donatella, 40, would assume all design responsibilities and that Santo, 53, would continue as the Versace group's chief executive.

Allegra and Daniel are the children of Donatella; the will was drawn up in September 1996, when Versace was recovering from treatment for a cancerous tumour and was described as being in an "elated" mood.

The Versace business empire last year made a profit of £28 million on a turnover of £320 million. Eighty percent of the group's revenue comes from exports. It has never been clear how the three Versaces divided ownership and control of the company. It was Santo who took the leading role in running the business side of the Versace empire over the past two decades, leaving his younger brother Gianni free to concentrate on designing his flamboyant clothes as well as perfumes, furnishings and accessories. Santo had also been steering the Versace business towards flotation on the world's stock exchanges.

But there were rumours of tensions within the Versace family, and Santo was hampered by allegations of tax evasion. At one stage he was brought to trial together with other leading Italian figures from the fashion world on charges of having bribed tax inspectors to issue favourable audits. He was convicted and fined, but said he was the victim of a racket run by the Italian finance police.

There were also persistent reports — not proven — that Gianni Versace was murdered on the orders of the Mafia to cover up alleged money laundering, and that a "songbird", a traditional sign of a Mafia killing, was found by his body. He received damages from a British newspaper in 1994 after it claimed his turnover was linked to the Mafia, but he later remarked: "They can say I am a mafioso, and it can hurt you and hurt family values, but not any more. You have to say: who cares?"

Versace openly adored his niece Allegra, whom he described as "my little princess". His nephew receives Versace's art collection, which includes paintings by Picasso and Leger as well as classical sculptures, and is estimated to be worth £40 million.



Versace, above right, gave his companion Antonio D'Amico, left, £20,000 a month. His sister Donatella gets nothing, but her son inherits his art collection

Russia's Christian minorities protest at pro-Orthodox Bill

FROM ROBIN LODGE IN MOSCOW

RUSSIA'S Roman Catholic and Protestant communities appealed to President Yeltsin yesterday to intervene against a new draft law on religion, due to go before parliament this week, aimed at giving pre-eminence to the Russian Orthodox Church and curbing "non-traditional" faiths.

The Bill is a revised version of a law passed this summer, but vetoed by Mr Yeltsin on the ground that it violated constitutional guarantees of freedom of worship. The new Bill, due to go before the State Duma tomorrow, includes amendments recommended by the President.

A joint statement issued by Russia's Catholic, Baptist, Adventist and Pentecostal communities said that the new version remained unconstitutional, despite changes that recognised the rights of non-Orthodox Christian denominations: "If the agreed version of the law is passed, it will still be discriminatory."

The Baptists have been particularly outspoken in their opposition to the law. Although they have been in Russia for more than 130 years and are the largest Christian denomination after the Russian Orthodox Church, they continue to face restrictions on their activities.

Aleksandr Vaprov, 40, has spent the past three years preaching from a converted lorry in various parking areas on the outskirts of Moscow. Last week his pristine white trailer stood in a sea of mud among about 200 battered lorries in a fenced site off Moscow's outer ring road. Lorries lurched and roared their way between mounds of rubbish, crater-like potholes and jagged chunks of metal. In the middle of this chaos, the white trailer stood out like a beacon, neat steel steps to a door in its side, next to the words in big blue capitals: "Transport for Christ".

Mr Vaprov left his job as a lift maintenance engineer to dedicate his life to preaching. Now he and his driver, Pyotr Ryazanov, travel round the Moscow ring road in a lorry given and fitted out as a mobile chapel by Baptists in the United States, stopping for a week or month in lorry parks round the city.

"I am from a Baptist family, the fourth generation," said Mr Vaprov, speaking inside the warm, wood-lined trailer with a row of plain benches screwed down to the floor. "Three years ago, our pastor asked me to take up this work, talking to drivers and explaining the Gospel to them. And I have been here ever since."

But if the new law is passed Mr Vaprov may soon find it very hard to carry on.

The new draft includes other Christian denominations in the list of religions to be respected with "traditional" non-Christian faiths, such as Islam, Judaism and Buddhism. However, all "foreign" religions — those not registered in Russia for 15 years — will be banned from holding services or distributing literature.

Although some non-Orthodox denominations, including the Baptists, will be officially recognised, they will be severely restricted in practice from public religious activities or even charity work.

Mr Vaprov is resigned to the Bill going though, but adamant that he will continue his work. "Look at Russian history. Moments of freedom never last long. We have been persecuted in the past and must face persecution again."

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'Pot' shot fired by Jospin's loosest cannon

FROM BEN MACINTYRE IN PARIS

DOMINIQUE VOYNET, the outspoken French Environment Minister, has called for legalisation of cannabis and admitted smoking marijuana herself in an interview that will embarrass Cabinet colleagues and confirm her reputation as the loosest cannon in the Government.

This week Mme Voynet, head of the French Green Party, replied "Yes" when asked by the satirical magazine *Charlie Hebdo* whether she had smoked "joints".

The interviewer, François Cavé, then asked if she still smoked marijuana. Mme Voynet responded with an emphatic, if ambiguous, French expletive to sidestep the question. "Merde," said the Environment Minister.

A medical doctor, Mme Voynet insisted that the occasional use of cannabis had "no effect on health and social relations" and should be legalised. "I have always been in favour of legalisation ... I am more concerned by the number of people who need sleeping pills than the number who confess to having smoked a joint," she said.

Mme Voynet was brought into the Cabinet after the victory of an electoral coalition of Socialists, Communists and Greens. The election marked the first time that the environmentalists had won seats in parliament.

Mme Voynet's views on cannabis, which have not been backed by the rest of the Cabinet or Lionel Jospin, the Prime Minister, represent a stark departure from the policy of the previous Government, which promised a crackdown on drugs and criticised The Netherlands for its liberal policies.

In the short life of the left-wing Government, Mme Voynet has emerged as the minister most likely to provoke controversy. After the death of Diana, Princess of Wales, she said she did not understand the level of emotion aroused and said the accident should be put "into perspective".

Mme Voynet's remarks on legalising drugs are likely to put further strain on the ruling coalition. An annual rally in support of legalising drugs, backed by the Greens, was cancelled by the Paris prefecture earlier this year, with the approval of the Interior Minister, Jean-Pierre Chevènement.

Compounding the Government's uncertainty on the issue is the fact that Bernard Kouchner, the Health Minister, is a signatory to a petition calling for the legalisation of cannabis. During the election campaign, M Jospin admitted that drug laws dating back to 1970 needed urgent revision. "Far from preventing drug addiction, the law only aggravates a problem that should be examined in the light of the experiences and policies put into effect by our neighbours."

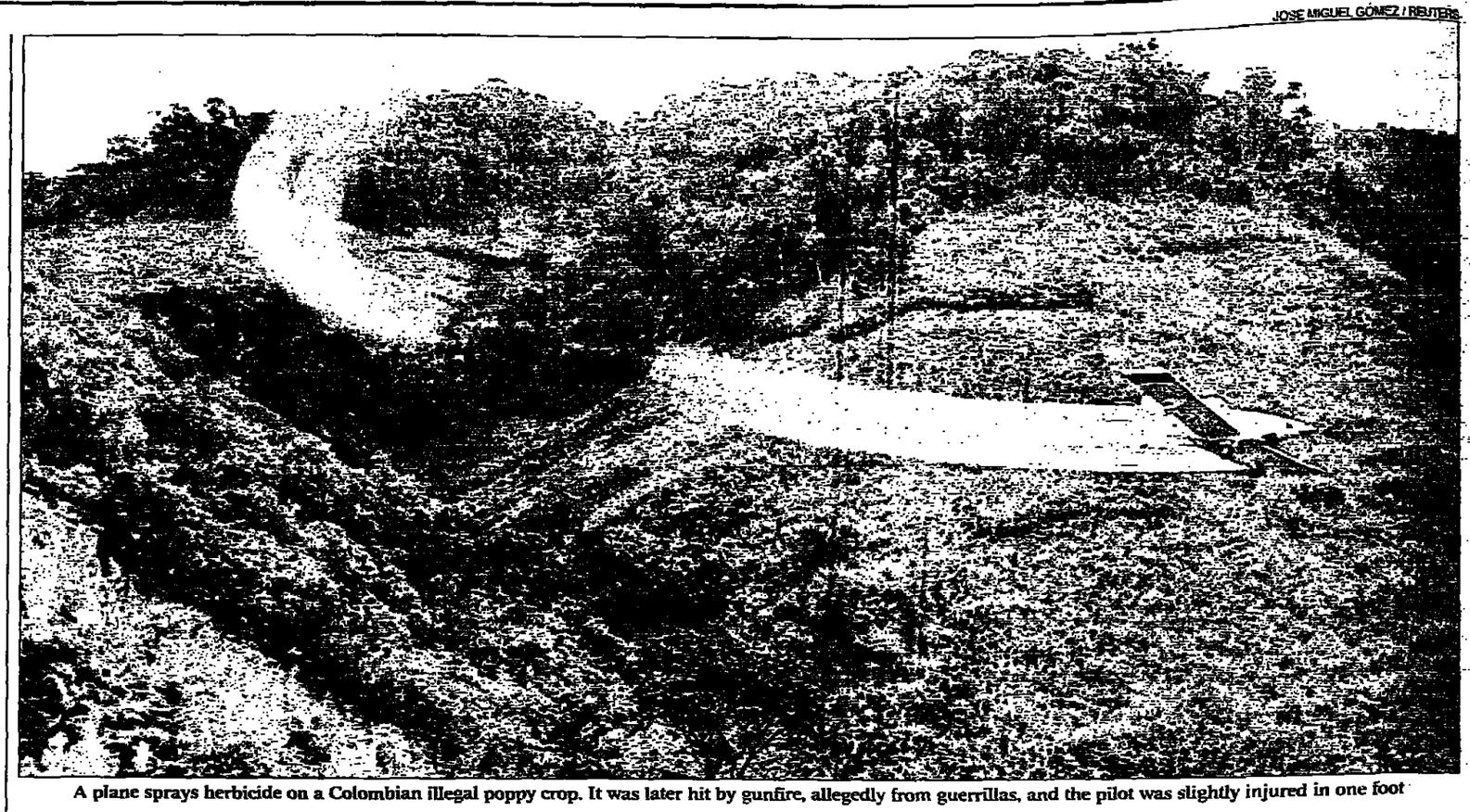
Confirming her reputation for shooting from the hip, on Tuesday Mme Voynet accused the national nuclear reprocessing company, Cogema, of violating safety rules. After a complaint by Greenpeace, she said the company had broken security regulations during a clean-up operation in the plant at La Hague, on the Channel near Cherbourg. The minister said the cleansing operation would be resumed "only when total confinement is assured", and promised a police report.

Allegations of high radioactivity levels around the plant earlier this year prompted her to issue an immediate ban on fishing, sailing and swimming in the vicinity in advance of an official safety report.



Voynet: wants cannabis to be declared legal

JOSE MIGUEL GÓMEZ / REUTERS



A plane sprays herbicide on a Colombian illegal poppy crop. It was later hit by gunfire, allegedly from guerrillas, and the pilot was slightly injured in one foot

British minister sees gun attack on anti-drugs plane



Illegally grown poppies being shown to Arthur Coltman, the British Ambassador, centre, and Tony Lloyd

BY VICTORIA FLETCHER

TONY LLOYD, the Foreign Office Minister for Latin America and Africa, witnessed the Colombian drug war at first hand when a plane spraying herbicide on a poppy crop was fired on only minutes after he had landed in the jungle.

The aircraft came under fire while destroying an illegal poppy plantation on Tuesday. Mr Lloyd watched as the plane and its pilot were hit. Two Colombian military helicopter gunships were called in to return the fire and to escort the crop sprayer to the ground, where the pilot was treated for an injured foot.

Using chemical defoliation sprays is often the most effective way to destroy the drug plantations on the borders of the Huila and Caqueta provinces of southeast Colombia, but low-level flying makes the aircraft easy targets for left-wing rebels below.

The Foreign Office said that Mr Lloyd was not in any direct danger. "The minister was unperturbed by the incident and continued with his visit," an official said. He added that the event would not alter the minister's itinerary for the visit, which has included talks with President Samper about Colombia's efforts to combat the drugs traffickers. "Drugs barons are a huge problem in Colombia: we are there to talk to the Government about these issues and we will continue to do so." The official said that the incident would not distract Mr Lloyd's attention from other important issues discussed with the President, covering human rights and especially Britain's future trading interests.

This is Mr Lloyd's first visit as minister to the South American country to view local police efforts in eradicating the drug crops. Britain increasingly has been providing military assistance to the Colombian Government in the drugs war, including SAS instructors.

Guerrilla campaign stifles 'sham' democracy in Colombia

FROM VICTORIA BURNETT IN GACHALA, COLOMBIA

WHEN Colombians go to the polls to choose their local government on October 26, the people of Gachala will not be joining them. Since rebels stormed this small Andean town on the night of August 3, all those running for mayor or the local council have withdrawn from the race.

The rebels gave aspiring politicians little choice: renounce your candidacy or become a military target. To drive the message home, they blew the police station to pieces, dragged two businessmen from their houses and shot them dead, and called the petrified townspeople to the central square to tell them that elections were prohibited.

"It's the choice to take if you want to save your life," says Lucretia Buitrago, the local council president, who decided not to run for re-election after the guerrillas' visit.

Gachala is one of around 40 municipalities without a single candidate in the elections. From the Caribbean coast to the coca-growing plains of southeast Colombia, rebels have launched a violent offensive — killing at least 25 mayoral candidates and abducting hundreds to force them to drop out of the political race.

"They're trying to twist the elections to sabotage them," says Gabriel Toro, head of the Foundation of Municipal Governments. He expects elections to be cancelled in around 10 per cent of the country's 1,072 municipalities. Where polls are cancelled, a military mayor will be installed. Politics and bloodshed go hand in hand in Colombia, where left-wing rebels, right-wing paramilitaries and drug traffickers traditionally use violence to dispose of opposition. Colombia prides itself on being the longest-standing constitutional democracy in Latin America, but it is increasingly one that exists only on paper.

"Colombian politics has become armed politics. Everyone knows that they can get something at a low cost through violence," says Juan Gabriel Tokatlián, a political scientist.

Over the past year, rebels have repeatedly humiliated the armed forces, taking advantage of the power vacuum left by a weakened government. President Samper was politically crippled by evidence that he won office in 1994 with the help of $6 million (£3.7 million) from the Cali drug cartel.

Colombia's rebels have declared his Government illegitimate and by sabotaging the elections have shown that they are now running many rural areas. They are also hampering what they consider to be a sham democratic process.

Girlfriend accused of chicken battery

Fort Lauderdale: A Florida woman was arrested after allegedly pelting her boyfriend with frozen chicken legs, a telephone and a circular saw when he came home late, police said.

Sabina Richardson was enraged when Darryl Garrett returned at about 1am on Monday to the home they shared, said detectives at Broward County Sheriff's Office. Ms Richardson allegedly hit him with a barrage of frozen chicken legs, jumped on his back and bit him, then lobbed a telephone at him, deputies said. He ran to his car for refuge and Ms Richardson followed, threw the saw and cracked the windscreen. Mr Garrett, 29, drove to his father's house and called the deputies.

Ms Richardson, 26, was charged with aggravated battery and throwing a deadly missile — the saw, not the chicken legs. *(Reuters)*

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11.4% £15,000	154.01	169.74	205.95	325.54
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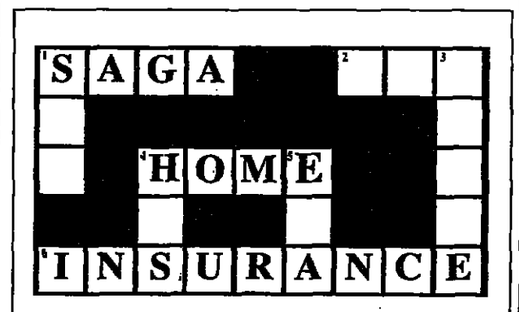
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Violence grows after settlers defy Netanyahu

FROM CHRISTOPHER WALKER IN JERUSALEM

THE Israeli Government was involved last night in increasingly desperate talks to defuse the confrontation over Jewish settlement in east Jerusalem.

Violence erupted after the Jewish-American millionaire at the centre of the storm took legal steps to try to prevent the eviction of Jews who have taken over two houses in the Palestinian suburb of Ras al-Amoud. About 300 Palestinians marched to the houses last night. They were turned back after scuffles with Israeli security men. There were also scuffles betwen Arabs and right-wing Jews coming to support the settlers.

Binyamin Netanyahu, the Prime Minister, cancelled the second leg of a proposed trip to Europe. His visit to Hungary was scrapped after he abandoned plans to visit Romania.

Amid Arab death threats



Moskowitz: enemy of the peace accord

and bitter criticism from Israelis resentful of his absentee status, Irving Moskowitz, a Miami-based businessman, emerged as the pivotal figure in a drama that Yassir Arafat, the Palestinian leader, said could prompt "a very negative reaction" unless swiftly resolved. Mr Moskowitz, 70, a confirmed enemy of the 1993 Israeli-Palestinian peace accord who has spent millions of dollars buying property for Jews in areas of east Jerusalem annexed by Israel after the 1967 war, appeared undeterred when he arrived at the disputed property under heavy guard.

As the former doctor arrived amid a posse of security men hired after Islamic Jihad vowed to kill him, one Jewish man triumphantly blew a ram's horn outside the houses at the centre of the dispute which is threatening to plunge the Holy Land into a new wave of violence. The horn is the traditional instrument that the Bible says the Israelites used to bring down the walls of Jericho.

Earlier, Mr Moskowitz had petitioned the Supreme Court to prevent the police from expelling the 11 Jewish settlers from the houses, which he claims to have bought legally and to be leasing to them. The court appeal came after the settlers had rejected a compromise which would have seen them replaced by Jewish seminary students. The compromise was also angrily rejected by the Palestinians, who have given warnings of an "explosion" of public anger if the evictions are not ordered before tomorrow's regular weekly Muslim prayers.

Moshe Peled, the Israeli Deputy Education Minister, who had tried to mediate between Mr Moskowitz and Mr Netanyahu, urged the settlers to accept the compromise. "I am very afraid that if there is no agreement over this, there will be a forcible evacuation," he said.

Up to 20 supporters of the ad hoc Land for Israel movement in the 120-member Knesset have vowed to try to bring down the Government if the evacuation is ordered, claiming that it would contravene the essential platform of their movement: that Jews must be allowed to live anywhere in the biblical land of Israel.



JIM HOLLANDER / REUTERS

Israeli border police struggle to keep a crowd of Palestinian protesters from the two houses in east Jerusalem occupied by hardline settlers

Welcome for Fiji's return to fold

BY MICHAEL BINYON DIPLOMATIC EDITOR

BRITAIN will strongly support Fiji's application to be readmitted to the Commonwealth at the Heads of Government meeting in Edinburgh next month.

Derek Fatchett, a Foreign Office Minister of State, said after visiting the South Pacific island group that his discussions with political leaders had confirmed the Government's view that Fiji's adoption of a new constitution paved the way for a return to democracy, better relations between the ethnic communities and readmission to the 53-member Commonwealth.

Fiji's membership lapsed in 1987 after two coups instigated by General Sitiveni Rabuka, the present Prime Minister. With the support of the indigenous inhabitants he overthrew the democratically elected Government, dominated by ethnic Indians, who form almost half the 800,000 population. The new constitution removes discrimination enacted against them.

Fiji has retained the Union Flag as part of its national flag and remained loyal to the Queen.

Readmission would have to be by unanimous vote, but there are fears that resentment in Delhi may lead to an Indian veto.

There are several potential new applicants for Commonwealth membership. Yemen has made a formal bid and Yassir Arafat, President of the Palestinian Authority, has expressed interest. Mary Robinson, the outgoing President of Ireland, also spoke of her country's possible membership.

Britain's place in US hearts secure

FROM TUNKU VARADARAJAN IN NEW YORK

AMERICANS see Britain as their country's second-best ally after Canada, according to an opinion poll published here, confirming that the "special relationship" is alive and well.

Of the 1,007 American adults surveyed by the Harris Poll organisation, 63 per cent described Britain as a "close ally", a number exceeded only by Canada, which scored a resounding 73 per cent. Britain's figures are up by 1 per cent from last year and by 7 per cent from their all-time low in 1994, when only 56 per cent of Americans believed that their transatlantic cousins were close allies.

Australia, France and Mexico followed behind Britain in the ally hierarchy, polling 48, 36 and 30 per cent respectively.

China, not surprisingly, emerges as the country viewed by Americans as the most unfriendly, with 60 per cent of those surveyed stating that Beijing was either "not friendly" or an "enemy". Only 6 per cent described China as a close ally. Russia was next, with 45 per cent expressing their continuing distrust of America's former Cold War adversary.

The most intriguing findings, however, pertain to Israel, another country with which America believes it has a special relationship. Israel is viewed as a close ally by only 29 per cent, with 32 per cent regarding it as unfriendly or worse. Only China and Russia rank higher than Israel in the unfriendliness stakes. Japan is seen as a close ally by only 21 per cent.

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THE SUNDAY TIMES



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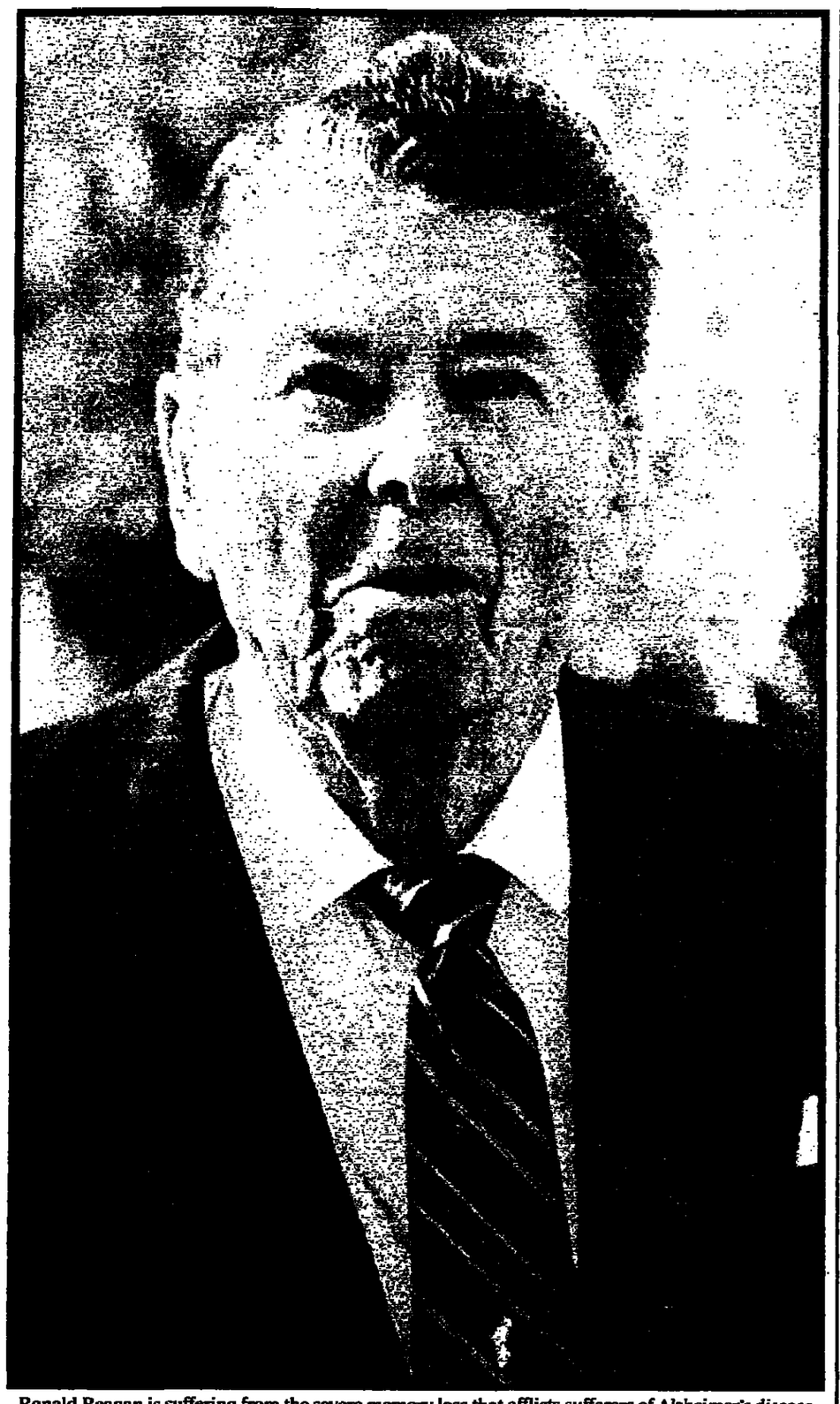


THE SUNDAY TIMES *IS* THE SUNDAY PAPERS



Dr Thomas Stuttaford reports on dementia; the benefits of coffee; slimming pills and side-effects; chronic eye problems; and a new form of mammography

Hope for those who suffer in Alzheimer's shadow



Ronald Reagan is suffering from the severe memory loss that afflicts sufferers of Alzheimer's disease

Doctors interested in Alzheimer's disease have been meeting in Stockholm this week, ready for World Alzheimer's Day on Sunday. Alzheimer's costs the nation £11.5 billion a year, £1½ billion of which comes directly from the NHS budget. In the UK, some 600,000 people suffer from Alzheimer's disease, which affects 5 percent of the population at the age of 65, one in five at the age of 80, and one in four at 85. There are many causes of dementia in the elderly, but Alzheimer's accounts for 75 per cent of all cases.

It is a myth that all patients with Alzheimer's are elderly. Most are, but it has been reported in patients as young as 29, and is not infrequently seen in those in their fifties.

Alzheimer's and other forms of dementia are seldom out of the news, and there are few people who do not know someone who is suffering from the disease. Indeed, one prominent sufferer is former American President Ronald Reagan.

> 'Patients can lose their way while on a familiar journey'

As is well documented, it causes a progressive loss of memory and patients with it find it more difficult to reason, and therefore to make quick judgments.

This lack of flexibility and slowness of thought easily leads to panic, so well demonstrated by "Jonesie", the Boer War veteran in *Dad's Army*, apt to rush about achieving nothing as he shouted "Don't panic! Don't panic!". Corporal Jones also demonstrated the lack of attention to turn-out and other signs of a disintegrating personality.

Patients with Alzheimer's become confused about where they are, and the time of day. It is a common experience that patients with dementia forget that they have told you the same story 20 minutes earlier, have asked you the same question five minutes before, and fail to recognise their old friends.

It is less often realised that they forget familiar landmarks and so can easily become lost on a once-familiar journey. Last year, my host kindly offered me a lift to a nearby town where I was due to give a lecture. As we climbed into the car, he told me that he had done this journey every day for 40 years.

Perhaps we talked too much, but it soon became all too apparent that he was lost. Finally we made it to the lecture hall an hour and a half late. Thereafter I watched him carefully for the rest of the evening and it was obvious that he was showing many of the signs of early dementia. It was obvious to me because I was a stranger, but Alzheimer's is so insidious in its onset, as in this case, that it often goes undetected by those who live with the patient.

Suggestions that there are factors that may delay the onset of Alzheimer's usually produce angry responses from the carers of patients with the disease. A frequent theme is that the sufferer was an individual of great intelligence when younger, always taking a lively interest in the world, and that it is insulting to suggest that Alzheimer's comes on later in those with a high education, and who had refused to abandon intellectual pursuits in retirement.

The organisation Research Into Ageing has been examining the effects of education and previous occupation on brain-reserve capacity in old age, in particular the retention of vocabulary and an understanding of the abstract meanings of words. The survey showed that although these qualities are affected in everybody with Alzheimer's disease, patients whose interests were intellectual when they were younger do not show the symptoms of Alzheimer's quite as soon.

A spokesman for Research Into Ageing said: "Our investigations into this important aspect of the disease are continuing. It is true that those people who have had a good education do fare better, but it may be that they are only more skilled at coping with and hiding their early symptoms."

There are many other projects investigating the possible factors affecting the time of onset of Alzheimer's disease. There is evidence, for instance, that a high cholesterol level is associated with an increased liability.

One of the more exciting research projects is on the effect of alcohol on Alzheimer's disease in later life. There appears to be an apparent reduction in the incidents of dementia, along with a greater alertness, in elderly patients who drink a modest amount. This may be the result of the higher levels of circulating oestrogen found in those who enjoy a drink or two. Other studies have shown that HRT reduces the incidence of Alzheimer's.

Scope for research into Alzheimer's disease is endless, and with an ageing population it has obvious appeal. The Alzheimer's Research Trust has already collected more than £1 million in aid of a centre in Cambridge. Another £4 million is needed.

Alzheimer's Research Trust, Livanos House, Granhams Road, Cambridge CB2 5LQ (01223 843899).

Research Into Ageing, Baird House, 15-17 St. Cross Street, London EC1 (0171-404 6878).

Slimming pills and the heart

British, as opposed to American, overweight patients who have taken slimming pills as part of their weight reduction programme should not be too concerned about the voluntary withdrawal of Ponderax and Adifax from the chemist. In Britain it has always been considered bad medicine to give a cocktail of slimming drugs to treat obesity. Most doctors have also made it plain to patients that when slimming pills have been needed, they should have been taken only for a limited time.

Conversely, in America, even reputable doctors have commonly prescribed a combination of drugs. Duromine phentermine and Ponderax fenfluramine has been their favourite mixture, and it is this combination, which has caused the recent furore precipitated by the discovery that some patients who had taken it had developed heart disease. Fortunately British doctors have always been expressly advised not to use a combination.

> In the UK, a course was restricted to three months

In August this year, the *New England Journal of Medicine* reported that there was evidence that the Duromine/Ponderax mixture might be associated with heart disease, in particular damage to the mitral and aortic valves which resulted in their incompetence. This term means that the valve no longer closes tightly and therefore leaks. This leaking, technically regurgitation, can be detected by echocardiography in 30 per cent of a group of patients who had been given this combination of drugs.

Once the heart valve leaks, the patient's heart has to work harder to compensate for the heart muscle's less efficient pumping action. In extreme cases, this lack of efficiency may cause the patient to be breathless, and suffer other signs of heart strain. The changes in the heart circulation can also result in a change from the sound of the heartbeat and the patient may develop a "murmur". There is some evidence to suggest that a valvular incompetence brought on by slimming pill combination may regress with the passage of time, but hard evidence on what is this most unexpected side-effect is not yet available.

Abrupt withdrawal of slimming pills for a person who has been taking them for some weeks can induce side-effects, including depression.

Every case must be considered individually but it is suggested that the dose of Adifax should initially be reduced from two to one capsule a day for the week before it is stopped entirely and those who have been prescribed Ponderax should only take one every other day for a week, and then abandon the course.

Chemists will continue to keep stocks of the drug to enable this withdrawal regime to be implemented but will thereafter not supply either drug again. This complete withdrawal of these drugs is a precautionary measure and as yet there is no alarm about the situation in Britain.

There have been earlier reports of essential pulmonary hypertension, another form of cardiovascular disease, following the use of Ponderax, even when this drug was used by itself. In Britain, the best known sufferer of this lethal complication is Professor Julia Polak, of Hammersmith Hospital in London, who needed a heart lung transplant. In America a few cases of valvular heart disease have been found in patients who have taken Adifax alone.

Even in the States those patients who are now suffering heart problems have on average taken the drugs for between six and 24 months. In Britain, a course of slimming pills was always restricted to three months.

People who have taken slimming pills and are worried are advised to see their doctor. If any abnormality, however trivial, is detected, they can be investigated by a specialist.

A helpline is available on 0800 980 7216.

New breast screen gives better picture



Linda McCartney: had cancer

MOST doctors are impressed by the results of the early intervention that is possible when breast cancer is detected by a mammography. The tumour may then be removed when it is so small that it cannot be felt with the hand.

Evidence is accumulating that shows regular screening saves lives. But one of the problems of mammography that doctors — but not patients — have always been aware of is that the interpretation of a mammogram requires considerable skill. This is particularly true the first time a woman has been screened, as there is no previous film with which to make a comparison.

Pulse magazine recently reported that a new form of mammography is about to be introduced. The new apparatus is scheduled to start working this month at the Royal Free Hospital in London. Called a scintomammogram, it will help doctors to make decisions in doubtful cases by picking up the presence of any malignant cells after they have been marked by a radioactive tracer that has been injected into the patient's foot.

The scintomammogram will be particularly useful in patients with very dense breasts, such as those on hormone replacement treatment. And when a scintomammogram is used, the breast does not have to be so firmly squashed — this not only gives a better picture, but is also less uncomfortable for the patient.

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CHANGING TIMES

Caffeine is good for your health – after all

ALTHOUGH coffee and caffeine have traditionally had a bad press, this reputation is undeserved. In the past year or two, reputable medical journals have reported that caffeine can revive a flagging memory, can reduce accidents in night workers, can speed recovery from a cold and may even cut the suicide rate.

At a conference in San Francisco earlier this year, a report from Professor Takayuki Shibamoto, of the University of California, showed that both regular and decaffeinated coffee contained antioxidants, the chemicals that may protect against some forms of heart disease and cancer.

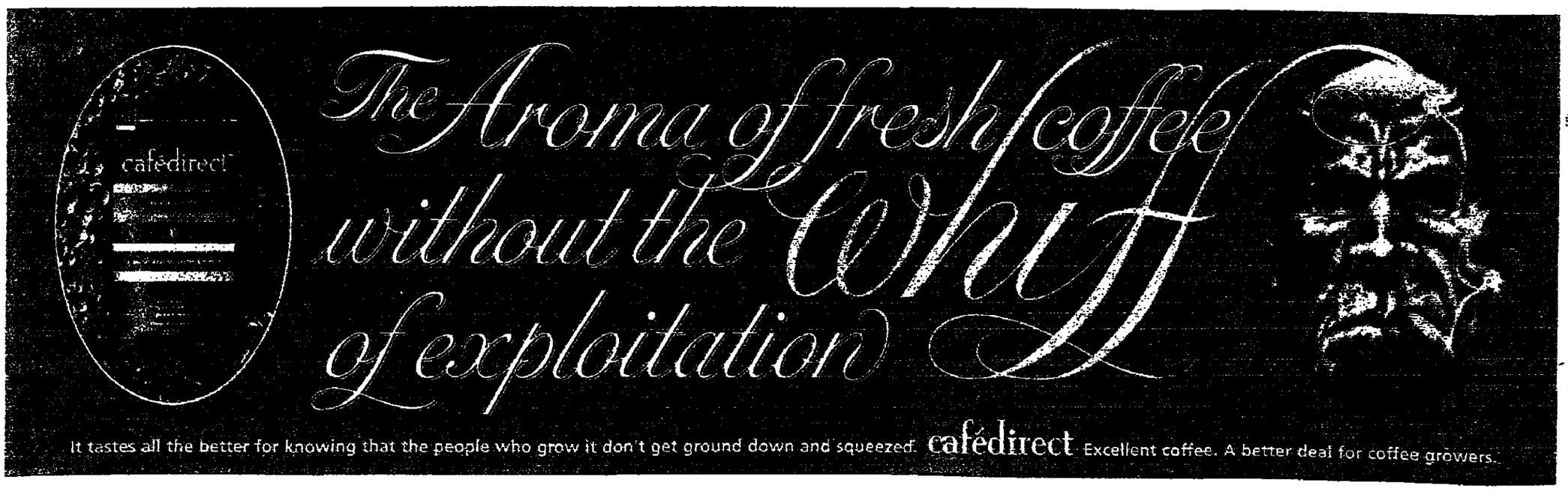
Another encouraging study by the British Cancer Research Campaign has recently been reported in the journal *General Practitioner*. It shows that caffeine can enhance the effects of radiotherapy on cancer of the bowel. Bowel cancer is resistant to radiotherapy but research has shown that large doses of caffeine improve its efficacy by 150 per cent. The disappointing aspect of this encouraging news is that no one could absorb the amount of caffeine needed to achieve this result because it would be toxic. Scientists, meanwhile, are working on caffeine-related substances, which might achieve the same effect.

Dry eyes that mask a problem

SJOGREN'S Syndrome is a chronic inflammatory disease which causes a marked dryness of the eyes, mouth and other mucus membranes. In many cases these symptons are associated with arthritis. Although Sjögren's Syndrome is little known, it is more common than systemic lupus erythematosus but less often diagnosed than rheumatoid arthritis. As well as the discomfort caused by dry eyes, and the problems ranging from a lack of sense of taste and smell to dental decay, Sjögren's can cause more serious disease. Dryness in the respiratory tract can result in chronic bronchitis, even pneumonia, and it can also be involved in kidney disease, as well as neurological problems affecting the nerves leading to the face and the eyes. In women the lining of the genital tract is also unusually dry.

Dry eyes and mouth are usually regarded as the first symptons of Sjögren's but a recent study reported in the *British Journal of Obstetrics and Gynaecology* has shown that, on average, women with Sjögren's Syndrome develop a dry vagina eight years before they notice a dry eye.

In a study of 240 women who had seen their gynaecologist about painful intercourse, seven were suffering from Sjögren's, and not from any psychological sexual dysfunction. They needed a lubricant rather than counselling.





Times have caught up with politicians' wives and lives: Tony Blair and his wife Cherie; Michael Howard and his wife Sandra; Peter Lilley and his wife Gail; Neil Hamilton and his wife Christine

Political shadows

Silent, supportive and virtually invisible — except at election time. Who'd be a politician's partner? **Mary Ann Sieghart** reports

Once the stereotypical political partner was a pearl-bedecked typist in a Pugin-panelled office keeping the MP's secretarial allowance in the family: or a full-time wife and mother, perhaps, stoking the home fires back in the constituency. Either way she was loyal and able — and awfully good at opening fêtes.

But these days we have gay MPs with lovers claiming travel concessions; women MPs whose husbands, or long-term partners, are the supportive ones; and even a Prime Minister's wife with a bona fide career. It's not just the ruling party that has changed: times have caught up with Conservative politicians' wives *and lives too.*

For the stalwart Tory wives, of whom Neil Hamilton's wife Christine must be the patron saint, the realities of a future together in Opposition — or even out of Parliament altogether — are hard to adjust to. Sally Neubert, organiser of the Conservative Parliamentary Wives Association, suffered greatly when her husband, Sir Michael, was thrown out of Romford after 23 years. As far as she was concerned, the outcome of May 1 was "like a death in the family. You get so many letters, and all they lack is a black border around them."

But for Gail Lilley, wife of Peter Lilley, now the Shadow Chancellor but previously the Social Security Secretary in the Major Government, there has been a liberation in defeat. "I've had 14 years of put up and shut up and I just said to my husband the other day, 'self-sacrifice has stopped'." For all those years of Tory rule, Gail had to hold her tongue. "Now it's over I can laugh about it, but I never talked about it at the time because I can't stand whingeing."

Gail, a successful artist and former fashion designer, recalls the sudden change in her life when her husband was first elected 14 years ago. "Suddenly there was no husband, just nothing. He would come in at midnight, two in the morning, *four in the morning. Then you know* you've been sidelined. They start to treat the home like a hotel and opt out of life."

Sometimes they're not even working. By phoning the number mysteriously labelled "Behind the Chair", she would find out if voting was going on late at night. "That way you'd know when they ought to be on their way home. But they're not. They're milling around, scheming and plotting and chatting. At the beginning, it was actually quite devastating."

Being the wife of a minister, she says, was even worse. "*I remember once I had* to call for Peter at the Treasury. They loathe wives there — it's a very masculine place. The driver took me up to the private office. They said: 'You can sit there and *wait for him.' And there was my* husband's door and outside the door there was this little hard chair. It was just like waiting outside the headmaster's office."

Then, at the Department of Social Security, "he used to get these diaries and there'd be a dinner engagement, 7.30 for 8, and at the bottom it would say, 'Black tie, speech and Mrs Lilley'. That was where I came in the pecking order!"

Ministers' wives also have to absorb the abuse that is likely to come their husbands' way. Gail and Peter Lilley had their house daubed by fathers protesting about the Child Support Agency. "Then, several hours later, the single mothers came. Then we had the asylum-seekers. It's a lovely feeling now when I hear the news: 'The Government came under fire yesterday ...' It has been harder for Peter, though. "My husband's been in Parliament for 14 years and he's never been in Opposition, so there's this huge period of adjustment. He's like someone who's come out of long-term care."

Others tell similar stories. When former Home Secretary Michael Howard's new pager bleeped at a party soon after the election, he had no idea how to turn it off. "Didn't you have one when you were a *minister?*" asked his companion. "Yes," replied the Shadow Foreign Secretary, "but I had a man to carry it".

Rachael Maunder, the wife of Andrew Robathan, another of only 165 Tories returned, has a different angle on her political partnership. As a City fund manager she feels "very fortunate to have my own career and my own life because it's possible to get very wrapped up in your husband's career". But political wives who have careers of their own still have to make big compromises. For being an MP, and still more so a minister, takes precedence over everything else, as Rachael discovered when her baby Kit was due, and the Tory Government was hanging on by a Rizla-thin majority.

> 'They loathe wives at the Treasury. It's very masculine'

"There was a real issue about what would happen if Kit was born during the week. Luckily he came on a Friday. But I'd have been pretty angry if I'd been lying in agony and *Andrew had to go and vote. It* would have made a bit of a mockery of life, wouldn't it?" Rachael has had to adjust to the lack of interest in her own career. "There is the general assumption that whatever you're doing in your career comes second to your duties as an MP's wife."

Even more modern than the high-flying wife is the supportive husband. Or in the case of Phil Cole, "partner, secretary, skivvy and sex slave", as he describes his job. Cole, the longtime partner of Caroline Flint, newly elected Labour MP for Don Valley, has given up his associate directorship a PR company to work for her at Westminster. The company car has gone, and the pay cut "has been a shock to my bank manager". Even his skills need brushing up. "Caroline thinks my filing is crap, and she's right." But he's happy with the arrangement. "It fulfils my ambition to help her politically. I can enjoy it without having tremendous status."

At least male political partners don't suffer from the Hillary Clinton syndrome: having to exaggerate their domesticity to make their lives *seem less threatening to the* general public. Hillary swapped cookie recipes during her husband's first presidential campaign, while Cherie Blair, who has a first-class degree and a career at the Bar, guest-edited *Prima* magazine. Some working wives feel let down by these compromises. Rachael Maunder, for instance, says: "At the end of the day, Cherie Blair dropped everything to traipse round after her husband during the election campaign. She was never even allowed to open her mouth. What's the reason for that, other than to look decorative?" Her favourite political wife is Gillian Clarke, Ken's wife, who makes no effort to look other than dowdy. "It's quite concerning," says Rachael, "that the British electorate can't accept a political leader with a working wife who doesn't look glamorous."

For a woman who never used to wear make-up or worry about her hair, Cherie has had to suffer more makeovers than British Airways. But other Labour spouses have it easier. Pauline Prescott, the Deputy Prime Minister's wife, has been allowed to keep her own brassy look and does not have to hold hands like the Blairs.

Such public displays of affection make Gail Lilley's flesh crawl. During the Tory leadership election, she recalls: "Every time we were due on a photo call it was, 'Will you hold hands?' and I thought, 'What? I don't hold hands with my *husband in public!' Cherie Blair started* all this. It's all her fault."

For both Gail and Sandra Howard, wife of Michael Howard, the Tory leadership election — what Gail refers to as "that *little horror*" — raised the possibility of playing opposite Cherie Blair as Shadow First Lady. For Sandra, "normal life seemed to be put on hold, really". She did not dare imagine what it would be like if Michael were chosen. Gail, however, admits she was worried that Peter might win. "I had a huge sense of humour failure when I thought of the ramifications."

Labour wives are discovering that they have their own problems now that their husbands are in office. Because their seats tend to be concentrated in the North of England and Scotland and Wales, they often see their spouses only at weekends. Maureen Ingram, whose husband Adam is now Minister of State at the Northern Ireland Office, lives near Glasgow. "*Sometimes when they come back on a* Friday and you've been running the show all week, they take charge and you have to bite your tongue," she says. Like other new ministers' spouses, Maureen is having to adjust. "I see less of him now. *He used to be home on Thursday evening,* now he's not back till Friday afternoon. Then he does his boxes at the weekend and the phone's always ringing. It's only been ten weeks but it feels like ten years."

Red boxes — which contain work for ministers to do at home — are the bane of the spouse's life. Gail Lilley remembers five of them arriving on their first Bank Holiday together after Peter became a minister. One wife of a new senior Cabinet minister says that waking up to discover that your husband has been appointed to government ought to be classed for stressfulness alongside moving house, bereavement and divorce. Another new minister found that, initially, his young children loved opening the boxes. Now, when he says he can't play football with them because he has too much work, they say: "Why can't Tony Blair do his own boxes?"

David Mills, husband of Tessa Jowell, Minister of State at the Department of Health, says: "They're an absolute bloody nuisance. She gets up at 5.30 each morning to do her boxes. It's ruining my *sleep pattern." One solution to the time* problem is to enter the House yourself. That is what Julie Kirkbride has done. Newly married to Andrew MacKay, Shadow Northern Ireland Secretary, she is now Conservative MP for Bromsgrove. "Being at the House of Commons makes it more convenient because I see more of him. Before, I was up in Bromsgrove and he was down at Westminster."

In becoming an MP, Julie has managed to avoid the biggest irritation, being treated as an appendage. Some wives refused to be interviewed for this piece for that very reason. Even Rachael Maunder, who enjoys her life, admits: "I got fed up to the back teeth with people asking, 'What's it like being an MP's wife? I used to say, 'Why don't you ask what's it's like being an investment manager's husband?' " Indeed.

● *Mary Ann Sieghart is an assistant editor of* The Times

This is an edited version of an article in next month's Vogue



TOMORROW

"We are loyal to each other in the fullest sense of the word": Dorian Jabri, partner of Chris Smith, Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, talks for the first time about their private and political partnership



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Time to stop the Third World debt treadmill

Gordon Brown must take a lead at the IMF, says **James Callaghan**

This week the finance ministers of the world are meeting in Hong Kong under the aegis of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank. Gordon Brown, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, arrives there tomorrow.

The occasion will be highly symbolic. It will remind China that the world expects her to keep to her undertakings that the recent handover will not lead to any weakening of Hong Kong's present financial integration into the rest of the world.

But much more than symbolism will be at stake. The finance ministers will also need to decide how to give practical effect to the pledges made by their heads of government in Denver last June, that there would be "new, concrete action" to support Africa in overcoming the abject poverty and near economic collapse of some of the sub-Saharan countries.

Consider the grim facts. The World Bank estimates that in 1993, no fewer than 250 million people were existing on less than a dollar (65p) a day. In Mozambique, weekly average earnings were as low as £1.15. Is it any wonder that the average Mozambican can expect death to come when they are no more than 47 years old?

There is no single cause for abject poverty in sub-Sahara. The World Bank lists among others: inadequate access to land and capital, poor access to credit, poor access to proper health and education, bad policies, excess arms purchases, and so on. And there is one other vital cause — debt — in which these countries are deeply mired in an impossible overhang.

Mozambique, for example, spends 8 per cent of its annual budget on education, and 3 per cent on health, but as much as 33 per cent on debt repayments to the West. It is on these points that the finance ministers' meeting in Hong Kong can make a breakthrough by recognising publicly that much of this debt will never be repaid, and that some of the countries concerned will never be able to hoist themselves up by their own bootstraps without further assistance. If they would say that, it would be a start in redeeming the Denver pledge made by the heads of government.

And it would be a concession to reality. It is little short of folly that every year our Parliament votes funds for the purpose of developing sub-Sahara's economic and social structure, and every year the recipients use equivalent funds to pay the interest owed to their debtors. In Mozambique, the equivalent of 90 per cent of each year's financial aid from the West has until recently been devoted to debt repayment, though this has now been reduced to 67 per cent. In Zambia, the figure is 70 per cent. Overall, the figure is about 60 per cent. These countries are walking a treadmill — walking, walking and never making any progress. We must all step off this crazy merry-go-round.

The World Bank has come forward with a welcome scheme which would provide further relief — the Highly Indebted Poor Country (HIPC) initiative. It could be a useful tool, but the relief is too slow in coming, the present conditions are too strict, and the number of countries which will benefit is too few.

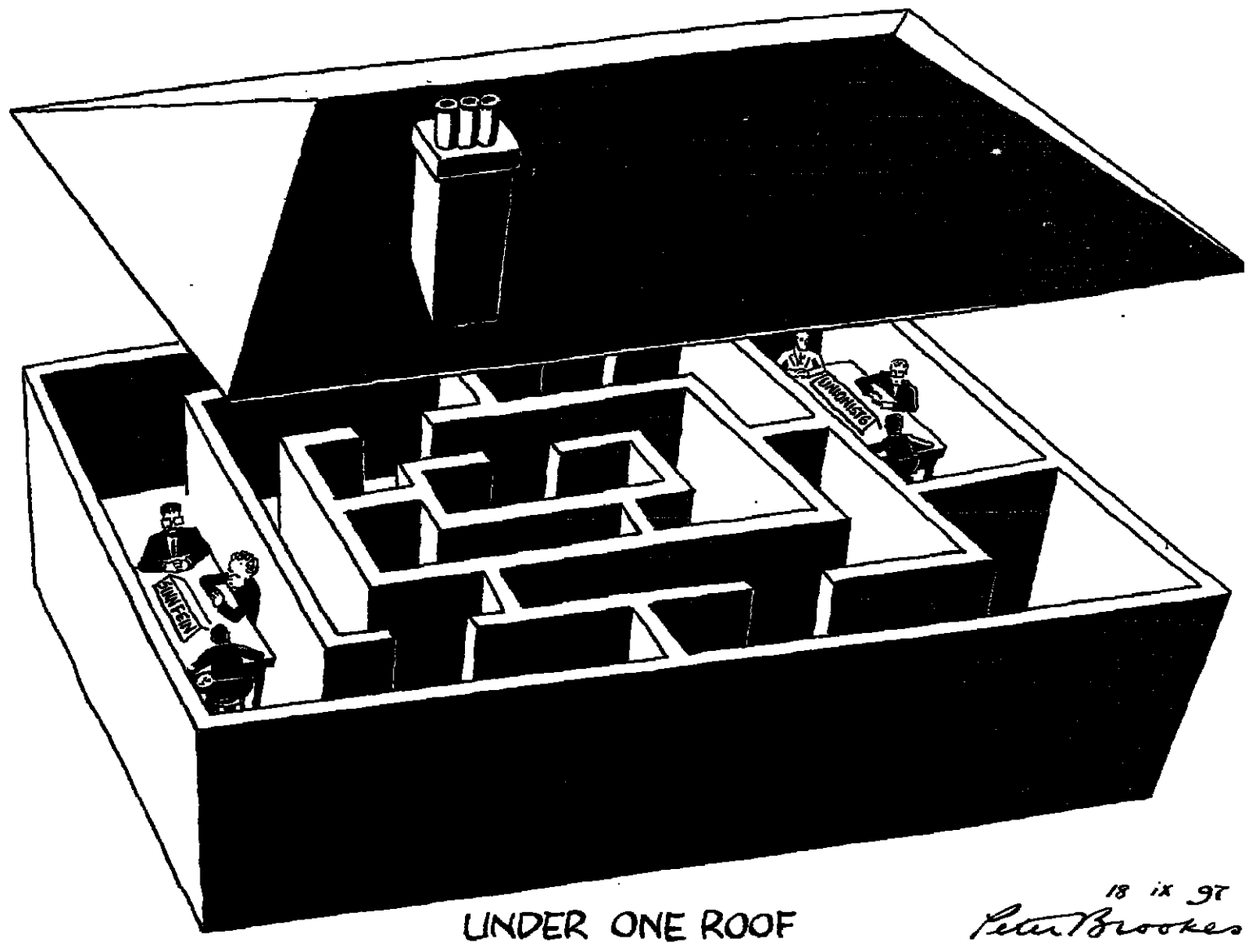
Now, a coalition of churches, charitable institutions and others, calling itself Jubilee 2000, has come forward with an inspired call to celebrate the millennium with a one-off cancellation of the backlog of unpayable debt. It is a bold and imaginative idea. If it is to become realistic, then the recipient countries must tie the ensuing relief to firm plans to use the funds to improve their economic infrastructure and to effective expenditure on better health and more education. Economic and social conditions must be created in which private investment will flow as willingly to the sub-Sahara as it does to other countries in the developing world.

> Much more than symbolism will be at stake

Gordon Brown has said that he shares many of the objectives of Jubilee 2000 and that he will press his colleagues to provide further relief. He faces a tough task. Germany, the United States and Japan have been dragging their feet over implementing the new HIPC initiative. They will need a lot of shifting. Yet a few weeks ago the IMF, with considerable help from Japan, could mobilise $16.7 billion to stabilise the currency problems of Thailand and South East Asia, while a third of that sum could do much to redeem the poor of Africa and Latin America from debt. This could be the "new, concrete action" promised at Denver.

Church leaders have reminded us that Britain did not hesitate to give a lead to the world in the 19th century when we led the abolition of slavery — against the consensus of our economic competitors. How much would it cost Britain today to give a lead to other countries by offering bilateral relief to the poorest countries now indebted to our Export Credit Guarantees Development? Is it too much for us bilaterally and the world as a whole to lift the slavery of debt from the shoulders of the world's poorest? A decision by the nations in Hong Kong to do this in the year 2000 would give us all a genuine reason to celebrate the new millennium.

Lord Callaghan of Cardiff was Prime Minister, 1976-79, and was among the first to raise the issue of Third World debt.



A system in the dock

The Shirley Porter case is gravely prejudiced even before it comes to court

William Rees-Mogg

It is not difficult to get justice for someone who is already a well-loved public figure. It is harder for someone who is unpopular and has been subject to years of press and political attacks. On October 2, which is the day of the Jewish New Year, the hearing of what can be called the Shirley Porter case will begin in the Divisional Court. The central question will be whether she and her fellow respondents have so far been given a fair trial.

The original events occurred in 1986. The subsequent allegation was that the housing policies in Westminster amounted to illegal gerrymandering. There were originally ten respondents. All of them have suffered great damage to their lives. Two of them have been totally destroyed: one, who might have been exonerated, committed suicide, the other — a council official of medium rank — has had a profound nervous breakdown and is in hospital.

The central respondent is Dame Shirley Porter; formerly leader of Westminster City Council, and once the most prominent Conservative in London. I had dealings with her on behalf of the Arts Council over Westminster's arts funding; in the Britain of the 1980s she was one of the three or four council leaders most enthusiastic for the arts. She was both a dominant personality and a self-publicist. I had no doubt she was effective, and the arts benefited.

No one questions that Shirley Porter has been the object of prejudice. She is Jewish, and subliminal anti-Semitism is part of British culture, on the Left as well as on the Right. Another Jewish woman in politics has been Edwina Currie: I think both women have been regarded by some people as "pushy Jewish ladies with big mouths". Lady Porter is a fighter, seen as a disciple and to some extent a lesser version of Margaret Thatcher. She suffered from the anti-Thatcher backlash. She was the daughter of Jack Cohen, the founder of Tesco, so she also suffers from the envy that attaches to great wealth. She was the woman who, more than anyone else, made Westminster the flagship of Conservative local government: the Labour Party regarded her as a legitimate target, though some of its attacks were wildly inaccurate.

Press and television have been very interested in the case, and have scarcely tried to be impartial. Many programmes and articles have simply seen Lady Porter as a villainess, neglecting an open-minded examination of the case for the Westminster housing policy. The *Evening Standard* has been largely hostile; as has BBC Television, going back to an early *Panorama* exposé, which relied on local objectors who were Lady Porter's political opponents. The media added to the prejudice.

The hearing in the Divisional Court is itself a peculiar one. It is an appeal by five of the remaining six of the respondents — the sixth being too ill to join — "to quash the decision of the auditor, at the audits of accounts of Westminster City Council for 1987-88 to 1994-95 to certify that the sum of £31,677,044 is due from the appellants". Although the hearing takes the form of an appeal, this is in fact the first judicial hearing. The auditor is John Magill; though a senior partner of Deloitte & Touche, the City accountancy firm, he has no legal training or qualification. The present appeal is against his findings based on his inquiry.

The procedure Mr Magill followed did have statutory authority under the Local Government Finance Act 1982, though a fairer alternative procedure is available under that Act. In the recent third report of the Committee on Standards in Public Life, paragraph 215, Lord Nolan commented: "We also received widespread criticism of the procedure followed in certain surcharge cases under which the auditor formulates and prosecutes the case, judges guilt or innocence, and determines the penalty on the basis of his own calculations of financial loss. We can say immediately that we can see no justification at all for the retention of that procedure." Even the Audit Commission itself accepts that "in all cases the auditor should make a case to the court", rather than make the adjudication himself. This type of procedure has also been rejected for courts martial by the European Court of Human Rights.

The issue is one of separation of function. Mr Magill acted as investigator, with powers to compel evidence; as jury, in that he decided guilt or innocence; and as judge, in that he presided over the proceedings and decided the penalty. The only role he did not fill was that of defendant. He himself observed that his functions were "judicial" or — "quasi-judicial", though he may not have behaved judicially. This extreme confusion of functions is plainly contrary to natural justice; it was made far worse by Mr Magill's prejudicial use of publicity.

The alleged loss of £31 million seems more of a sighting shot than a realistic estimate. Councils normally improve their revenue by the sale of council houses at a discount, a policy widely adopted and unquestionably lawful; the additional cost of rehousing was not estimated to exceed £1.5 million a year. The programme was, in fact, a failure, and rather few houses were sold; the net financial difference, plus or minus, is more likely to have been measured in hundreds of thousands of pounds than in millions, let alone tens of millions. The cost of the inquiry to date has been about £3 million: if the object was to save public money, it has not been achieved.

On January 13, 1994, Mr Magill did something which seems to be unprecedented, and is open to serious objection. He held a televised press conference to issue his preliminary report. At that point he had only completed his initial inquiry; he had not heard the defence submissions in answer to the charges he formulated. He did not know what the defence would say. Most of the respondents had had no legal representation during his investigation. Yet his findings were damning; because he called the press and television conference, they were very widely reported.

He read the most prejudicial paragraph straight to camera: "My provisional view is that the council was engaged in gerrymandering, which I am minded to find is a disgraceful and improper purpose, and not a purpose for which a local authority may act." Is this Detective Inspector Magill, Prosecuting Counsel Magill, Foreman of the Jury Magill or Judge Magill speaking?

How unsatisfactory these highly publicised provisional findings were is demonstrated by something Mr Magill said later: "I shall consider any representations which are made to me before making any findings of fact, before reaching any final views, and before making any decision in consequence of this objection." If he had been a lawyer, Mr Magill would have realised that his preliminary findings, couched in such dramatic terms, totally prejudiced the impartiality of his "final views". It is a case of execution first, defence later.

Worse than that, Section 30 of the 1982 Act, of which Mr Magill was aware, made it a criminal offence for him, or anyone else, to reveal any information obtained by his procedures under the Act. That provision is intended to prevent the very prejudice which Mr Magill created. On indictment such a breach of confidentiality is punishable by "imprisonment for a term not exceeding two years". Anyone reading his provisional findings would have formed a painfully clear view of the evidence as Mr Magill saw it. Yet Mr Magill blandly observes that "there is nothing in this statement which involves the disclosure of information obtained in the course of my audit". It is amazing that anyone, however unfamiliar with the law, could have come to that conclusion.

The merits of the original policy, even its legality, remain open to debate, though it was far from unique to Westminster: the alleged cost seems fanciful but is a legitimate matter for discussion; Shirley Porter will never be a popular woman. But the ten respondents have suffered a wholly unjust form of adjudication, now rightly repudiated by the European Court of Human Rights, the Audit Commission and Lord Nolan. One of the respondents killed himself because of it, one was driven mad, all have been gravely damaged. John Magill chose the more egotistical procedure under the 1982 Act and compounded its inherent injustice by his resort to sensational publicity. He should never again be employed in any quasi-judicial capacity.

The Divisional Court comes to a case distorted by an almost unique degree of prejudice. It will remember that a wholly unjust procedure cannot produce a reliably just result.

Labour's welfare muddle

Rivalry and reform don't mix, says **Iain Duncan Smith**

At last week's TUC conference the Prime Minister once again talked of his "radical modern vision" for reforming Britain. Before the election Mr Blair made it clear that welfare reform was a key objective for new Labour and once in power he appointed Frank Field as the Minister of State for Welfare Reform. Yet almost five months has passed, and far from there being a clear process of reform, there is confusion in all aspects of the Government's social security review.

For example, Gordon Brown has taken upon himself the responsibility for analysing the prospect of integrating tax and benefits from the DSS, by establishing a separate taskforce run by Martin Taylor. The Chancellor of the Exchequer believes "many of the barriers to integration in the past — both administrative and ideological — have gone".

Yet Harriet Harman, the Secretary of State for Social Security, has always made it clear that she has ideological objections to such a sweeping reform because of the way the benefit is delivered, namely to the wage-earner through PAYE. This means that, for instance, non-working women would not receive benefits directly, but through their husbands' wage packets. For Ms Harman such a reform would be regressive. But it is becoming more and more difficult to know where she stands. Before the election she attacked Conservative plans to reduce benefit to lone mothers. Yet within two months of taking office she implemented them.

Furthermore, Mr Field has said he is against merging tax and benefits, which is the Chancellor's "Holy Grail". He wants to eliminate means-testing, which he has described as "the enemy within the welfare state". Having been asked by the Prime Minister to produce a reform package, he now finds himself undermined by the Chancellor's proposals and his Secretary of State's subservience to the Treasury.

Surely, with Mr Field's track record on welfare reform, which is the reason for his appointment, one might expect all these reviews to be overseen by him and then by the Secretary of State. Yet this is not the case. Furthermore, it is now apparent that the blueprint Mr Field has produced has gone straight to the Prime Minister.

This lack of co-ordination between the Secretary of State and her Minister of State was underlined during the summer recess, when Mr Field spoke about devolving social security budgets and regionalising benefit payments. When these proposals were criticised by some Labour MPs, Ms Harman made no comment in support of her minister or his proposals.

Then there is the question of pension reform, over which ministers have got themselves in another mess. Mr Field's stakeholder scheme, praised by the Prime Minister, has been dealt a body blow by the Chancellor. Mr Brown's decision to abolish tax relief on dividends for pension funds has strengthened Serps, the state earnings-related pension scheme. Yet Mr Field's well-publicised scheme requires the abolition of Serps. Given that fact, it is not surprising that John Denham, an Under-Secretary at the DSS, has been running this area of reform and that Mr Field has not been allowed to answer questions on pension reform on the floor of the Commons.

During the summer there were press reports that civil servants had been asked to prepare a paper on how the link between pensions and earnings could be restored. This enabled Barbara Castle, a champion of pensioners, to look pleased. However, another Social Security Minister, Baroness Hollis of Heigham, denied that this was even an option.

The confusion over welfare policies was compounded as Peter Mandelson, the Minister without Portfolio, continued his search for a proper job during the summer and removed another potential responsibility from the DSS, by launching a new social exclusion unit which will apparently work to tackle poverty. It is unclear what this unit will actually do, but what is clear is that Labour's official welfare team will not be responsible, as it will be run from the Cabinet Office.

Labour seems to be pulling in different directions over welfare reform, from greater compulsion in pension contributions to ending or keeping means-testing. The disquiet is not engineered by the Opposition, and is not only felt at the grass roots, but at the very top of the parliamentary party. Reforming the welfare state and society was much talked about by Tony Blair before the election, but it is becoming increasingly unclear what his vision is, and who will be responsible for implementing it. While it is wise to spread responsibilities, it is wrong to scatter them; such a process can lead only to confusion. The present confusion reveals the absence of a "radical modern vision". What we have instead is the product of competing ministerial ambitions. Too many cooks is a recipe for chaos.

The author is Shadow Secretary of State for Social Security.

New Penny

AS Ian McEwan celebrates his secret second marriage, his former wife is forging her own literary career — spurred on, she claims, by financial necessity.

Penny Allen is crafting a series of literary works, several of which paint an unflattering portrait of husband behaviour, the first of which will be out in November.

The celebrated author and his wife appeared to lead a blissful life at their Oxford home, raising four children during their 21 years together (14 as man as wife), but in 1995 Ms Allen petitioned for divorce on the grounds of McEwan's unreasonable behaviour. They live separately in Oxford, to be near their two school-age children.

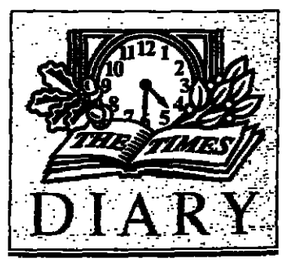

Penny Allen: telling all

The short stories, says Miss Allen, address a range of troubling issues, supposedly drawn from her "well of experience". One revolves around a hospital delivery room, where a man brings a former lover to watch his wife give birth, while another concerns a man's extravagant sexual appetites.

Ms Allen, a meditation expert, claims she has taken up her pen out of need. "When you are living in Oxford, with two children, on little money, you have to turn your mind to these things."

She says the terms of her divorce settlement leave her no choice but to stay in Oxford. "I want to be near the children, so I have to stay in Oxford even though it is prohibitively expensive to live here."

Friends of McEwan insist that he is a generous character who has done everything to provide for his children. His office was discreet, saying Ms Allen's observations were a "purely personal matter".



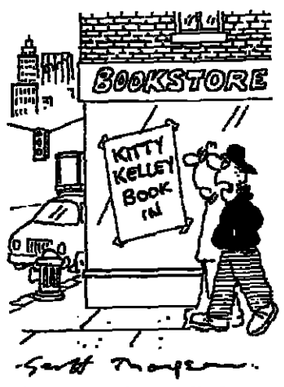
● *ASKED what he makes of Wee Willie Hague's penchant for wearing baseball caps — presumably a frantic attempt to boost his blokeish credentials — his defeated Tory leadership challenger, Ken Clarke, was clear: "I favour a trilby."*

Clearly Hurd

LATEST firecracker to be hurled at the House of Windsor comes, strangely, from that master of tact — Lord Hurd of Westwell. While eulogising the late Princess of Wales in *Prospect* magazine, the former Foreign Secretary rather, well, puts his well-shod foot in it. "I knew one side of her — a Princess anxious for help and advice ... I have glowing memories of time spent with her," he reflects, before adding: "She was much easier to help and advise than some other members of the Royal Family."

Good heavens

God: the theme park. In America, naturally, they will celebrate the 2,000th birthday of Jesus by building the world's first biblical theme park. The £250 million project — rivalling our Millennium Dome — will boast a mechanised cast; a robotic Christ will walk on water and android Disciples will talk to each other at the Last Supper.



"Apparently it's all about royalties"

And in a tribute to Darwinism, this man-made edifice at Pigeon Forge, Tennessee, will be called God's Wonderful World. Uh oh.

● *SO grand, these Labour types. Lord Irvine of Lairg, Lord Chancellor, often eats oranges at his desk. So as not to soil his delicate hands, he asks a civil servant to peel them.*

White mischief

AMONG those who believed that Black Wednesday was in fact White Wednesday include even members of that family of rampaging Europhiliacs, the Garel-Joneses. It transpires that Lord G-J, who pushed Maastricht through, has interesting observations five years on from the day the pound crashed out of the ERM. "One of my sons in the City seems to have done quite well out of Black Wednesday," says the lugubrious lord. "I asked him if patriotism had sort of crept into his thoughts," he will tell the forthcoming Channel 4 programme *Bye Bye Blues*. His son's response, it seems, was more pragmatic than principled.

Acting up

AN odd complaint. Patsy Kensit, the comely wife of the Oasis musician Liam Gallagher, claims she is tired of her image as a "rocker's babe", which has stunted her career: "It's a real pity because I want to act. I haven't been on stage since I was 16," says Mrs Gallagher, whose career started promisingly in *Absolute Beginners*.


Patsy: stage ambitions

A loss, indeed. But Patsy surely might be taken a little more seriously as an actress and a little less seriously as a rock chick if she were not already well into her third rock-star marriage — at the grand old age of 29.

P·H·S



BRIGHT WEDNESDAY

History lessons Blair must not be allowed to forget

It is fitting that the best combination of economic figures seen in Britain for more than two decades should have been published on the fifth anniversary of Black Wednesday. The pound's humiliating expulsion from the European exchange-rate mechanism in September 1992 destroyed the authority of John Major's Government and may have doomed his party, but for the British people it turned out to be an unqualified boon.

By unshackling the pound from the German mark and thereby releasing the British Government from the need to follow economic policies made in Frankfurt, the events of Black Wednesday were directly responsible for the strong economic growth and the steady reduction in unemployment which started within months of Britain's withdrawal from the ERM. In the same five years, Germany and France sank ever deeper into the morass of mass unemployment. This is a history lesson which the Labour Government must not be allowed to forget.

In a timely reminder of the benefits of the currency flexibility restored on Black Wednesday, the Office for National Statistics yesterday announced another large reduction in unemployment. The official jobless count now stands at just 5.3 per cent of the workforce, the lowest level in 17 years. And even allowing for the many changes in benefits, retirement arrangements and part-time working, independent authorities, ranging from the Bank of England to the International Monetary Fund and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, concur that unemployment is now less of a problem in Britain than in any other major Western economy with the exception of the United States.

More remarkably still, the new British jobs have not been bought at the cost of high inflation, unbalanced trade or permanent currency devaluation. Mr Major grimly prophesied on the eve of Black Wednesday that a floating pound would produce "rising prices, rising wages, rising inflation and a long-term deterioration in Britain's competitiveness". None of this has come to pass. Inflation remains little higher than in Germany and France, despite the fact that unemployment there is almost double the British level. Britain's exports and imports are in balance, despite the fact that we are enjoying a consumer boom, while Europe remains in recession. Even the pound, after helping to revive the economy by floating downwards, has now regained its earlier strength against the mark and French franc.

Yet despite such apparently conclusive demonstrations of the benefits of monetary independence, there are powerful voices in the business community and in all of the major political parties demanding that the power over Britain's money should again be transferred to Frankfurt and that sterling should again be shackled, this time to the euro instead of the mark. The calls for Britain to rejoin the ERM, or even to commit itself to future membership of the European monetary union, may at present be scarcely audible. But with Britain preparing to take over the EU presidency, the murmurs from Euro-enthusiastic businessmen, diplomats and ministers will turn into loud insistence that only by committing himself to EMU can Tony Blair play a constructive part in the single currency debate.

With history and economics so clearly ranged against them, the advocates of a European single currency will resort to political claims. Mr Blair will be told that by staying out of EMU he will lock Britain out of the leadership of Europe; and that by promising to join EMU he could put Britain on a par with Germany and France and raise himself from mere national politician to statesman on the European stage. When he hears such talk of "slow lanes" and "second-class" Euro-citizenship, Mr Blair should recall another of Mr Major's prophecies just before Black Wednesday. To take the pound out of the ERM, the former Prime Minister said, would be "to accept that Britain will be forever second-rate in Europe". Mr Blair should look at the economic figures and reflect on the fickleness of political fate.

HIT AND MISS

Air traffic control is an accident waiting to happen

The mid-air collision of two German and American military aircraft hundreds of miles off the coast of Angola with the loss of all on board is more than a human tragedy. It is a deadly indictment of the chaotic state of air traffic control over the entire African continent, and a warning that the present method of regulating air traffic around the globe is seriously inadequate.

The chances of two planes hitting each other over a remote part of the South Atlantic would seem infinitesimal. It is unclear why the planes were on the same flight path, why they had no warning of the other's approach and why grond controllers have no record of the crash. What is quite clear, however, is that the deficiencies of communications systems in most of Africa mean that pilots now fly over the continent virtually blind. Few air controllers have the right equipment, speak passable English or monitor traffic responsibly. Overflying charges are pocketed by corrupt governments and not spent on computers and radar. In July alone, Angolan air traffic control reported 12 near misses; the figure for Chad was 16. South African Airways is even considering a return to the longer route to Europe around West Africa that it was obliged to fly during sanctions. Air safety will be an urgent issue at the regional meeting in Ghana this week of the International Federation of Airline Pilots Associations.

Africa is not the only continent causing concern. In the past few weeks there have been two extremely serious near misses over Heathrow: in one, the planes missed each other by some 300ft, or less than a second's flying time. Figures show that the skies over Western Europe are becoming ever more crowded: air controllers are reporting intolerable levels of stress with virtually no dip in peak traffic periods. World forecasts point to a 6.6 per cent growth in air traffic in the next four years, with the number of international and domestic scheduled passengers rising to 1.8 billion by 2001.

Luckily, there has not been a corresponding rise in collisions or near misses. But American air controllers are sufficiently alarmed that they have launched an experiment to see whether there are safer ways of directing planes than through narrow and carefully regulated corridors. Pilots, relying on onboard navigation and the satellite-directed Global Positioning System, set their own course and simply keep ground control informed, rather than relying on ground control to maintain safe separation. In future, most planes will be equipped with the Future Air Navigation System, already in use in Australasia, which will give pilots freedom to plot their course.

Until then, air safety could be improved in several ways. The first obvious change is to widen the corridors and open up vast areas still reserved for military traffic. Fighter jets must also be banned from all civilian routes: some 25 per cent of all near misses last year involved military aircraft, and yesterday two American jets on routine training flights collided off the coast of New Jersey. Petty chauvinist insistence, especially in Europe, on national control of all national airspace should give way to more pooling and co-operative arrangements, as happens in much of Northern Europe where traffic is controlled from one centre in Maastricht. And the rush of all pilots to the same narrow altitude band over the Atlantic where they hope to pick up the best winds and save fuel and time should be more strictly regulated. Airlines have done much to assure passengers that their planes are safe; much more must be done if that assurance is to extend to the skies as well.

ART SENSATION

Young British artists are traditionally challenging tradition

The purpose of any new art movement — in so far as it can be said to have a purpose — is to unsettle and challenge. Boldness and confrontation are the essence of the avant garde. It accosts its viewers with the radical and inflammatory — and for that reason is often difficult to understand. Not since the arrival of the Pop generation in Britain has tradition been more flagrantly flouted than by today's young British artists whose work, as it has been collected and promoted by Charles Saatchi, is now on show at the Royal Academy of Arts.

Flaunting its ability to spark controversy, this show has been given the provocative title *Sensation*. And this is exactly what it has caused. Over the past weeks, attempts to ban the showing of Marcus Harvey's *Myra* — a representation of a notorious Myra Hindley photograph painted in children's handprints — have rampaged hysterically through the media. Last week the distinguished sculptor Michael Sandle resigned in protest and other academicians have threatened to follow.

The visitor, however, should keep an open mind. Some of the exhibits in this show may seem vapid or imitative — more reliant on cheap shock and tacky commercialism than the depth of feeling and philosophy which informs the best art. But many of the pieces focus an unflinching lens on a contemporary world of violence and cruelty, depravity and despair, boredom and waste. Their sharp images cut a direct path to the emotions.

Nor is the work on display limited to the brutal culture of a disillusioned generation. Charles Saatchi has a broadly catholic taste. His collection ranges from the severe minimalist abstraction of Jason Martin and Simon Callery to the abrupt explicitness of Ron Mueck's oedipal *Dead Dad*. It extends from the figurative traditions of Jenny Saville's painterly female nudes, to the monumentality of Rachel Whiteread's unornamented sculptures.

Displayed within the context of the academy's Georgian halls, these works acquire a paradoxically historic resonance. New British artists forge their links with tradition even as they strive to break them. The work of the contemporary era may be brazen, cheeky, ironic and rude: it may challenge preconceptions of what constitutes art. This is, after all, what the avant garde has always meant. The new British contemporaries have earned their place in the academy's annals.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 0171-782 5000

Opportunities and dangers in the 'new voice' for Wales

From Mr Siôn Cowell

Sir, Now is the time for all who live in Wales to lay aside doubts and reservations and come out and vote resolutely "yes" for a Welsh assembly.

Margaret Thatcher used to say people should stand on their own feet. And prominent Conservatives are taking her at her word. Sir Wyn Roberts, Conservative MP for Conwy from 1970 until the last election, is actually calling for an assembly with stronger powers. Others, including Viscount St Davids, are joining their countrymen in Labour, the Liberal Democrats and Plaid Cymru in calling for a strong "yes" vote.

Scotland has voted overwhelmingly "yes". Soon London will be voting for its own regional government. The English regions may well follow the London lead. Can we in Wales afford to be left behind?

The choice is not between an assembly for Wales and the status quo. The status quo has changed irrevocably with the Scottish "yes". Tony Blair is right. Things can no longer stay as they are. The choice on September 18 is quite simply a choice between a new voice for Wales and being left out in the cold.

The process of devolution began long ago, with the creation of the Welsh Board of Education in 1907. It continued with the appointment of the first Welsh Secretary in 1964 and the creation of the Welsh Office in 1965. A Welsh Government already exists. A Welsh assembly is simply another step in the process.

A Welsh assembly will not create a new bureaucracy. The bureaucracy is already there. But a "yes" vote will ensure this bureaucracy is democratically accountable to us who live in Wales. This happens everywhere else in Europe. Why not in Wales?

Yours faithfully,
SION COWELL
(Press Officer, Yes for Wales — Anglesey Campaign),
Plas Maelog, Beaumaris, Anglesey.
September 15.

From Lord Renton

Sir, William Rees-Mogg writes a more than usually woeful piece today ("Revenge of the Celtic fringe", September 15), prophesying that devolution and the European movement between them may be the end of the English nation.

Has he ever paused to think that if such an unlikely event were ever to happen, his own constant and acerbic anti-Europeanism would be a contributory cause?

The Scots are much less frightened of Europe than the English. The "auld alliance" may have something to do with this, but more important is their knowledge of how small countries such as Ireland have prospered in the European Union. They found the bitter Euroscepticism of so many Tories in the last election unreal, and they threw out our remaining MPs.

If we are to have a reasonable prospect of holding together a devolved Britain, it must be on the basis of English, Scots, Welsh and Ulstermen working together, with our partners on the Continent, to achieve an economic and monetary union that respects nations but provides sufficient strength to withstand global competition in the next century. A hard but not impossible objective.

This is the aim of the French and Spanish, both old nations. It must be the aim of England and Scotland as well.

Yours truly,
TIM RENTON,
House of Lords.
September 15.

From Mr Keith Brighouse

Sir, William Rees-Mogg is right to point out the dangers to England from a Celtic-dominated Government that is clearly shooting from the hip.

With the Scots and the Welsh enthusiastically defining themselves, the English are being defined by default. Perhaps it is time for the English to stop seeing themselves as British and reaffirm their own national identity.

Those people in England who believe in the United Kingdom should accept the battle to keep Britain together is lost and should now fight to stop the regionalisation of England. This carving-up of England will not mean more democracy, as the Government would have us believe, but will neuter English identity. Not only will the English have to pay for unnecessary new bureaucracies, they will be powerless to object to subsidising the collectivisation of Scotland and Wales.

Given the vagaries of this Government in regard to a future constitutional settlement and its reluctance to accept that the English have a vital interest in any changes, an independent England doesn't sound a bad idea.

Sincerely,
KEITH BRIGHOUSE,
21 Gaitskell House,
Victoria Avenue, E6.

From Mr Andrew Lambert

Sir, Wales is at present dysfunctional. There is an unconsecrated marriage between the Establishment (the "Taffia") and the Welsh Office; initiatives are strangled at birth; and Europe's oldest living language faces a slow death.

To avoid obliteration Wales *must* follow Scotland's example.

Yours in desperation,
ANDREW LAMBERT,
Flat 3, 19 Mason's Yard,
St James's, SW1.
September 17.

From Mr Ray Kingdon

Sir, I am Welsh and live in Cardiff, and thus feel obliged to vote in favour of a Welsh assembly. This obligation hangs heaviest over us non-Welsh speakers; after all, here is a chance to prove our "Welshness". There is no logic in this, just blind nationalistic duty.

However, a recent holiday experience has helped bring me back to my senses. In August I took walking holidays in three different areas: South Pennines, North York Moors and Snowdonia. I shared drinks and jokes in Halifax, Bakewell and Sheffield but in North Wales hostelries backs were rudely turned and the locals spoke exclusively in Welsh.

These "sons of Harlech" seemed very pro Welsh assembly. No wonder; it's ultimately designed for them. It is simply not designed for me.

Cardiff has much more in common with Bristol than Bangor. The people of Cardiff are more like Liverpudlians than Llangollenites. Voting "yes" is a step away from Englishness and towards Welshness. Watch your step Cardiff!

Yours etc,
RAYMOND L. KINGDON,
77 Heathway, Cardiff.
ray@dyspel.demon.co.uk
September 10.

From Mr Paul Keenan

Sir, The question asked of the Welsh in the coming referendum is the same as asking a hungry man: "Would you like to eat today?" It does not offer a menu, it does not indicate a cost, but it is designed to prompt the answer "yes" without the thought of such details.

The Government should stop stimulating Pavlovian reaction to justify its policymaking, and allow discussion and a depth of thought before action.

Yours faithfully,
PAUL KEENAN,
35 Beaconsfield Road,
Claygate, Surrey.
p.keenan@which.net
September 16.

Blood and guts at Academy show

From Mr Arnold van Praag

Sir, Simon Jenkins in "The art of sensationalism" (September 13) and your other reports on the Royal Academy's chamber of horrors exhibition rise to the bait, as required.

No, this show does not anticipate criticism, as you report (September 11): it courts it. That is what it is for.

Surely it is a little late for those jaded Dadaists to continue to *épater les bourgeois* and for the bourgeois conveniently to oblige.

Of course it would be more interesting if the RA put on a show that was rather more up to date. In the meantime, one was always taught that the right way to deal with naughty children was to ignore them.

Yours faithfully,
ARNOLD van PRAAG,
Dove Cottage,
Weston Colville, Cambridge.
September 13.

From Mr Nicky Hamlyn

Sir, In ridiculing the forthcoming *Sensation* exhibition Simon Jenkins misrepresents a number of artworks, both past and present.

The "pile of dirty baby's nappies" that the ICA exhibited in the late 1970s was not a pile. The nappies were exhibited in cases, along with other material — notes, diagrams, etc — in order to document the process of weaning a child from milk to solids. The work, *Post Partum Document* by Mary Kelly, examined this process from a psychoanalytic perspective and the nappies traced the visual changes in faeces.

Jenkins also scorns Tracey Emin for "filling her tent with the names of her sexual partners". Yet this work, a tent filled with people's names, is actually called *Everyone I Have Ever Slept With 1963-1995*, which is not the same thing.

Modern art — "atonal" music, "piles" of bricks — is a nice soft target for columnists to get their teeth into. But it is a pity they feel the need to vent their spleen in this way because modern art does need serious accessible criticism that will help bewildered gallery-goers.

Yours sincerely,
NICKY HAMLYN,
21 Friars Walk, Lewes, East Sussex.
September 14.

From Mrs Victoria Solt Dennis

Sir, It's time the art establishment stopped citing Goya's *Disasters of War* (as you quote a royal academician as doing in your report today) as a justification for exhibiting fantasies of blood and violence as art.

Goya took pains to make quite clear that the *Disasters* were works not of imagination but reportage: two of the most horrific scenes in the series are unequivocally captioned "I saw this" and "This too". They offer no support for the invention of gratuitous violence, as any royal academician should know perfectly well.

If artists who produce horrific fantasies for exhibition believe they can be justified on their own merits, let them do so: but they can claim no support from Goya.

Yours sincerely,
VICTORIA SOLT DENNIS,
12 Prospect Row,
Brompton, Gillingham, Kent.
September 11.

From Mr Alan Brison

Sir, First *Sensation* at the Royal Academy, now the National Gallery makes its contribution.

From this week, borrowed from Germany, they will be showing an oversized canvas, a self-indulgent exercise in violence and gore, the work of yet another young artist. His other predilections include the depiction of dogs copulating and defecating, children pissing and shapeless female forms where one's attention is pointed to the indentations left by tight garters.

The picture I refer to is Rembrandt's *Blinding of Samson*, dated 1636.

Yours faithfully,
ALAN BRISON,
11 Hall Park,
Berkhamsted, Hertfordshire.
September 14.

From Mrs Christine Whitaker

Sir, Every so often the emperor steps out without his clothes: it has always been a wonderful joke on humankind. At the Royal Academy the whole court are on display in their various couture underwear.

Academicians should not worry: it's all about money, not Monet. The antics of a few people don't amount to a hill of beans in this crazy world, and we will always have Rodin et al.

Sincerely,
C. WHITAKER,
Flat 3,
44 Great Pulteney Street, Bath.
September 12.

From Mr S. J. Trahair

Sir, It seems to me that the problem is not that the Royal Academy of Art cannot tell the difference between art and garbage (report and Diary, September 17), but that it doesn't think there is a difference.

Yours faithfully,
STEPHEN TRAHAIR,
Petherbridge, The Crescent,
Crapstone, Yelverton, Devon.
September 17.

Race-hate case

From His Honour Judge Bathurst Norman

Sir, I greatly dislike making any comment about a case which I have tried, but since at least one MP has rushed to criticise me for excessive leniency in the case of *Regina v Atkinson* ("Neo-Nazi jailed for hate-filled magazines", report, September 12), I think it right to do so.

The maximum sentence laid down by Parliament for the offence of publishing material intending thereby to stir up racial hatred is two years' imprisonment. I stated this in passing sentence and made it clear that, in my view, that sentence was too low.

Judges are bound to implement the will of Parliament.

Yours faithfully,
G. BATHURST NORMAN,
The Crown Court at Southwark,
1 English Grounds, Southwark, SE1.
September 12.

Russian visas

From the Ambassador of the Russian Federation

Sir, Your newspaper has long given particular attention to seemingly the only problem in Russian-British relations, which is visa practices.

We understand the feelings of Mr Michael Lewis, whose letter was published on September 10. We also are painfully aware of a great number of grievances of Russian citizens who apply for visas, often with no success, to the British Embassy in Moscow.

We have had consultations with the relevant British authorities on the subject. The Russian side is ready and willing to simplify visa procedures. But it takes two to tango.

Yours sincerely,
YURI FOKINE,
Embassy of the Russian Federation,
13 Kensington Palace Gardens, W8.

No 10's role in appointing bishops

From the Reverend Prebendary Patrick Dearnley

Sir, For many months the clergy and congregations of parishes throughout the Diocese of Liverpool (and members of other churches too) have been praying for the guidance of the Holy Spirit in the appointment of our new bishop (leading article and letters, September 16). In addition a very full process of consultation has been conducted involving representatives of many organisations, secular as well as church, in the city of Liverpool and throughout Merseyside.

It would be instructive to learn how much prayer has been offered over this matter within the sacred portals of 10 Downing Street. The decision to reject both nominations of the Crown Appointments Commission will dismay churchpeople and will unquestionably stimulate calls for the abolition of the present procedure for appointing diocesan bishops.

In the early Eighties as the Anglican Area Dean of Islington I was frequently aware of the distant, if not disdainful, attitudes of many (not all) Labour Party supporters towards the Church. In recent years one has been encouraged by the change in climate exemplified by the stances of "new" Labour emanating from certain quarters of that London borough. It is ironic that we may now well hear the lament: "Come back, loony Left: all is forgiven."

Yours sincerely,
PATRICK DEARNLEY,
St John's Vicarage,
16 Adelaide Terrace,
Waterloo, Liverpool.
September 17.

From the Secretary to the Crown Appointments Commission

Sir, Your leading article today was a timely reminder of the constitutional role of the Prime Minister in the selection of bishops of the Church of England. However, the implication that those in the Church concerned with these matters are at odds with this is wide of the mark. The Crown Appointments Commission fully accepts that the Prime Minister may choose one or other of the names submitted or may ask for further names. We welcome his proper interest in this, as we did that of his predecessors.

As you correctly state, the diocese concerned has four representatives on the commission. My experience has been that the four react favourably, finding it a robust and caring process which compares well with equivalent processes in other major organisations.

As to the outcome, anyone who knows those appointed in the last few years would find it hard to equate them with the notion of bland committee men, as has been suggested in some quarters. For example, the Right Reverend Bill Ind is to be enthroned next Saturday as the next Bishop of Truro and anyone less bland it would be hard to imagine. My Cornish friends are delighted to welcome him.

Yours faithfully,
TONY SADLER,
Secretary to the
Crown Appointments Commission,
S/O 01, Fielden House,
Little College Street, SW1.
September 16.

From the Reverend Peter Haughton

Sir, The Prime Minister has every right to appoint and disappoint bishops.

Yours faithfully,
PETER HAUGHTON,
The Vicarage,
Robin Hood Lane, SW15.
p.haughton@umds.ac.uk
September 16.

Stopped clocks

From Mr Ian Hall

Sir, Commander Jenkins (letter, September 15) will be pleased to know that the inhabitants of County Cork are still anxious to be helpful to visitors.

The entrance to the self-catering accommodation in which we stayed earlier this year was fitted with a security lock. For our benefit a notice had been taped to the glass saying: "To operate lock, press buttons 2 and 4 together then press 3." An addendum said: "If you still can't open the door, the one at the end of the corridor is not locked."

Yours faithfully,
IAN HALL,
The Cottage, Lower Snowden,
Burnhill Green, South Staffordshire.
September 16.

From Mr Desmond Crilly

Sir, I feel sure Mr Douglas Lowndes's grandfather (letter, September 8) must have mistaken the railway station with the three clocks.

Any Irishman could have told him that things like this always happen in Kerry.

Yours sincerely,
DESMOND CRILLY,
Plas Gwyn,
Llanfaelog, Isle of Anglesey.
September 8.

Letters that are intended for publication should carry a daytime telephone number. They may be sent to a fax number — 0171-782 5046. e-mail to: *letters@the-times.co.uk*

Never say dye

From Lord Lawson

Sir, You report my former colleague Alan Clark as saying (interview, "History man who refuses to bow to the passage of time", September 13) "Nigel Lawson dyed his hair very early".

I do not know whether anyone nowadays takes the entertaining Mr Clark, of Matrix Churchill fame, seriously; but in case they do let me make it clear that, while I have nothing against hair dye, or even for that matter Mr Clark, I have never in fact dyed my hair in my life.

Yours etc,
LAWSON,
House of Lords.
September 13.

COURT CIRCULAR

BUCKINGHAM PALACE
September 17: The Princess Royal, President, Riding for the Disabled Association, this afternoon reopened the office, now named "Lavinia Norfolk House", at the National Agricultural Centre, Kenilworth, and was received by the Rt Hon Sir Adam Butler (Deputy Lieutenant of Warwickshire).

Her Royal Highness, President, The Princess Royal Trust for Carers, later visited the Coventry Carers Centre, 3 City Arcade, Coventry, and was received by Her Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant of West Midlands (Mr Robert Taylor).

The Princess Royal afterwards opened the new Tenby Industries Limited headquarters at Kings Central, Great Kings Street, Newtown, Birmingham.

KENSINGTON PALACE
September 17: The Duke of Gloucester, Commissioner, English Heritage, this morning attended a Commissioners' meeting at Fortress House, Saville Row, London W1.

The Duchess of Gloucester, Patron, the Army Families Federation, this morning attended the Annual Conference at the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst and this afternoon, as Deputy Colonel-in-Chief, Adjutant General's Corps, visited officers of the Corps at Worthy Down, Winchester, Hampshire.

YORK HOUSE
September 17: The Duke of Kent this morning visited Land Rover and the Central England Training and Enterprise Council, Lode Lane, Solihull, and was received by Colonel Anthony Griffiths (Deputy Lieutenant of West Midlands).

Royal engagements

The Princess Royal will attend the British Equine Veterinary Association Annual International Scientific Congress, Harrogate, at 10.40; and as Patron, the Butler Trust, will visit HM Prison Askham Grange, Askham Richard, York, at 1.45.

The Duke of Gloucester, as President, NABC — Clubs for Young People, will visit clubs in Surrey; and will attend a reception and dinner to mark the 50th anniversary of the Society of Archivists at Guildhall, at 7.15.

The Duke of Kent, as Patron, the South Bank Foundation, will attend a reception at the Purcell Room, Festival Hall, at 6.00.

Memorial service

Mr Geoffrey Pack
A memorial service for Mr Geoff Pack, Editor of *Yachting Monthly*, was held yesterday at St Bride's, Fleet Street. Canon John Oates officiated, Mr Ken Pack read the lesson, Oliver Pack read *Remember* by Christina Rossetti and Sir Robin Knox-Johnston read an extract from *Yachting Monthly*. Miss Libby Purves and a group of friends and colleagues gave addresses. Mrs Pack (widow), Claudia, Theo and Tilly Pack (children) and many other family, friends and colleagues were present.

Lecture

Atlantic Council
Professor Walter Goldstein, Vice-Chairman of the Standing Conference of Atlantic Organisations and Visiting Professor at Rockefeller College, New York State University, was the guest speaker at an Atlantic Forum Briefing arranged by the Atlantic Council of the United Kingdom, held last night at Brassey House, London WC1. Mr Alan Lee Williams, Director of the Council, was in the chair.

Birthdays today

Lord Ackner, QC, 77; Mr Ray Alan, ventriloquist, 67; Mr Anthony Beadles, Headmaster, Epsom College, 57; Mr Jack Cardiff, film director and cameraman, 83; Mr Niall Crowley, former chairman, Allied Irish Banks, 71; Miss Siobhan Davies, choreographer, 47; Viscount Eccles, CH, 93; Mr Robin Fleming, former chairman, Robert Fleming Holdings, 65; Sir Thomas Hetherington, QC, former Director of Public Prosecutions, 71; Sir Curtis Keeble, diplomat, 75; Dr Marjorie Mowlam, Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, 48; Mr Derek Pringle, cricketer, 39; Lord Rodger of Earlsferry, QC, FBA, 53; Mr Peter Shilton, footballer, 48; Mr Geoffrey V. Smith, former director, London Tourist Board, 81; Mr J.M. Stoddart, Principal and Vice-Chancellor, Sheffield Hallam University, 59; Professor Dorothy Wedderburn, former Principal, Royal Holloway and Bedford New College, 72.

Kent College, Canterbury

The Autumn Term began on September 11 with the school welcoming a record 130 new pupils. An Open Morning will be held on Saturday, October 18, and term ends with the Carol Service to be held in Canterbury Cathedral at 7.30pm on December 12. The Governors have appointed Mr Andrew Wyndham Lewis as Bursar. Mr David and Mrs Gail Bunyan have been appointed House Parents of Austen House and Mr Sean Kerly, MBE, joins the staff as Marketing Manager and with his wife Jacqui become House Parents of Wesley House. Heads of school are Alastair Connolly and Sophie Scutt. All former pupils are requested to contact the school with names and addresses to be included in the Millennium celebrations.

Sergeant executed for cowardice wins justice at last

Shot hero's name put on war memorial

BY ALAN HAMILTON

MORE than 80 years after he was shot as a coward on the Somme, the name of Lance-Sergeant Joseph William Stones has been added to the war memorial in his home town of Crook, Co Durham.

Crook yesterday became the first town in the country to honour a soldier executed for cowardice, after a long campaign by his descendants who believed Stones and many others like him were denied any vestige of natural justice amid the carnage and confusion of the First World War.

At a simple ceremony attended by Stones's few surviving descendants and a group of townspeople representing widespread local support for the move, the freshly chiselled name was unveiled beneath those others of the town who had died with more obvious heroism.

Last year Andrew Mackinlay, Labour MP for Thurrock, introduced a Private Member's Bill seeking a full pardon for all 307 men shot for cowardice or desertion during the Great War. The Bill failed but John Reid, Armed Forces Minister in the new Government, has promised a review. The Ministry of Defence is currently looking at the possibility of pardons, but has given a warning that after such a lapse of time the process will be complex, sensitive and very lengthy.

Stones was a small, wiry infantryman of the 19th Durham Light Infantry, married with three young children, who had been fighting continuously for ten months in the trenches of the Western Front. On November 26, 1916, at the height of the Battle of the Somme, Stones and a Lieutenant Mundy climbed from their trench to go on patrol.

On the edge of the huge shell hole known as King's Crater they were ambushed by a German raiding party and Mundy was shot dead. Stones's rifle still had its leather cover over the breech and its safety catch on, so he could not immediately return fire. Instead he obeyed his officer's last command, running back to warn others, while throwing his rifle across the trench to impede German progress.

As he ran he collapsed, apparently in shock. He was taken to a field hospital unable to walk or speak. Next day he was arrested and accused of "shamefully casting away his arms in the presence of the enemy".

His statement to the court martial read: "A shot went off and Lieutenant Mundy fell to the bottom of the trench. He said, 'My God, I'm shot. For God's sake, sergeant, go for help and tell Mr Howes' ... As I turned to go the Huns were stepping over Mr Mundy and I put my rifle across the trench to stop them from getting across at me so that I could get a lead on them to warn the men." But it did him no good. Manacled, blindfolded and tied to a post, Stones was shot by a firing squad in a farmyard at Rollencourt on January 18, 1918. He is buried in the war cemetery at St Pol near Agincourt, but the words "killed in action" are absent from his headstone.

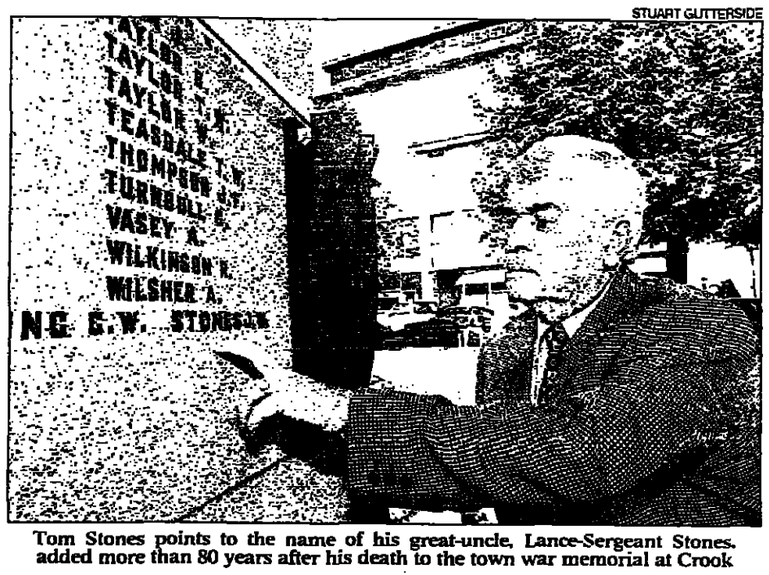
Tom Stones, 56, a microbiologist and the soldier's great-nephew, said yesterday: "This was a man who survived the Somme, who went over the top of the trenches numerous times and who fought with enormous courage for his country. Will Stones was not a coward; he was a true hero. I am very proud of him and I wish with all my heart I had known him."

Had he surrendered there and then he would have survived the war. Mr Stones said. "Instead he took the brave man's course, and was taken out and shot like a rat by his own men as a result."

Of the 307 men shot in 1914-18, most are now thought to have been suffering post-traumatic stress disorder after months of battle, poor diet and foul conditions. At Stones's court martial, his platoon lieutenant reported that the young sergeant had recently been in poor health.

Mrs Olive Brown, leader of Wear Valley council, said that she had first heard of Sergeant Stones when the new Government announced in May that it would take a fresh look at cowardice cases. "We decided not to wait for an official pardon, but to honour a brave man in the most fitting way we could. We traced his family to seek their permission, only to find it was something they desperately wanted anyway."

STUART GUTTERSIDE



Tom Stones points to the name of his great-uncle, Lance-Sergeant Stones, added more than 80 years after his death to the town war memorial at Crook



Sergeant Stones who was shot by his own men

Forthcoming marriages

Mr P.J.H. Stinson and Miss M.P. Thorne
The engagement is announced between Philip, elder son of Mr and Mrs Robert Stinson, and Meriel, second daughter of Sir Peter and Lady Anne Thorne.

Dr R.C.A. Clarke and Miss A.V. Williams
The engagement is announced between Richard, youngest son of Dr and Mrs H.J. Clarke, of Eastbourne, and Alison, daughter of Mrs Vivien Ward and stepdaughter of Mr Brian Ward, of Buckleberry, Berkshire.

Mr P. Felbeck and Miss D.C.J. Rowe
The engagement is announced between Paul, son of Mrs Josephine Felbeck, of Royal Leamington Spa, Warwickshire, and Drusilla Charlotte Jane, younger daughter of Mr and Mrs Roger Rowe, of Marlow, Buckinghamshire.

Mr W.H. Haiser and Miss M. Bullock
The engagement is announced between William, elder son of Mr and Mrs Walter Haiser, of Leigh-on-Sea, Essex, and Maxine, elder daughter of Dr and Mrs Tony Bullock, of Leigh-on-Sea, Essex.

Mr J.P. Herholdt and Dr H. Cox
The engagement is announced between John, elder son of Mr John Herholdt and the late Mrs Louise Herholdt, of Durban, South Africa, and Helen, daughter of Mr Graham Cox and Dr Jill Cox, also of Durban, South Africa.

Mr C.J. Jarrold and Miss E.R. Bowers
The engagement is announced between Charles, son of Mr and Mrs Antony Jarrold, of Caistor St Edmund, Norfolk, and Ellisa, daughter of Mr and Mrs Christopher Bowers, of Naperville, Chicago, USA.

Mr R.I.M. Gordon and Miss J.R. Worsley
The engagement is announced between Rupert, younger son of Mr Bruce Gordon, of Callington, Cornwall, and Mrs Peter Oliver, of Milton Abbas, Dorset, and Joanna, youngest daughter of Mr and Mrs Richard Worsley, of Cirencester, Gloucestershire.

Mr A.M. Jones and Miss C.H. Lucas
The engagement is announced between Adrian, elder son of Mr and Mrs Alistair Jones, of Caerleon, Gwent, and Chloe, daughter of Colonel and Mrs Dudley Lucas, of Chilmark, Wiltshire.

Mr G.T. Opperman and Miss S.A. Trapp
The engagement is announced between Guy, son of Mr Michael Opperman, of Tenbury Wells, Worcestershire, and Mrs Julia Edwards, of Selborne, Hampshire, and Sophia, daughter of Mr Peter Trapp, of New York, New York, and Mrs Regina Thomas von Bohlen, of Millbrook, New York.

Mr F.R.C. Salvesen and Miss L.D. Ongley
The engagement is announced between Francis Robin Charles, eldest son of Mr and Mrs Robin Somervell Salvesen, of Eaglescairnie, East Lothian, Scotland, and Leah Danielle, elder daughter of Mr and Mrs William Andrew Roy Ongley, of Auckland, New Zealand.

Mr M.W. Vigor and Miss D.G. Maddocks
The engagement is announced between Mark, youngest son of Mr and Mrs S.J. Vigor, of Beechingstoke, Wiltshire, and Deborah, eldest daughter of Mr and Mrs B.J. Maddocks, of Chirton, Wiltshire.

Receptions

Viscount Mackintosh of Halifax
Viscount Mackintosh of Halifax was the host at a reception held yesterday at the House of Lords to mark the third anniversary of the Youth Sport Trust, to improve sporting provision for all children in the United Kingdom.

Frink Award
Miss Floella Benjamin, Executive Chairman of the Women of the Year Lunch, in aid of the Greater London Fund for the Blind, presided at a reception held yesterday at Moorfield's Eye Hospital to announce the winner of the Frink Award for blind and partially sighted women.

Dr Louise Culham, Head of Optometry at Moorfield's and chairman of the award, introduced the Hon Mrs Carole Lawson, of the Carole and Geoffrey Lawson Foundation, sponsor of the award, and Dr Julie Schofield. They presented cheques and badges to the winner, Mrs Elaine Noad, Director of Community Services for South Ayrshire Council, to the second prize winner, Ms Louise Byles, the first blind clinical psychologist in Britain, and to the third prize winner, Ms Lynda Cantor, founder of the Retinitis Pigmentosa Society. The Marchioness of Lothian, founder president of the luncheon, also spoke.

Dinner

British Institute of Non-Destructive Testing
Mr M.R. Dawson, President of the British Institute of Non-Destructive Testing, was in the chair at the annual dinner of the 30th conference of Non-Destructive Testing, held last night at the Cheltenham Park Hotel, Cheltenham. Earlier, Dr J.M. Farley delivered the President's Honour Lecture, and Mr D.L. Cuthbertson, President of the American Society for Non-Destructive Testing, also spoke. A number of prizes and awards were presented during the evening:

The 1996 Roy Sharpe Prize was awarded to Mr R A Smith of the Defence Evaluation and Research Agency (DERA); the John Grimwade Medal was awarded to Dr A McNab and Dr A Cochran from Strathclyde University for a paper they co-wrote with Professor G Hayward. Dr K J Kird and Mr I Cornwell, the Ron Halmshaw Award was presented to Dr E A Birt of DERA; the T H Cole Award was presented to the Institute's North East Scottish branch; and the Tony Lager Award was presented to the Institute's Solent branch.

Glaziers' Company

The following have been elected officers of the Glaziers' Company for the ensuing year:

Master, Mr G.C. Bond; Upper Warden, Mr G.D. Cracknell; Renter Warden, Mr R.A. Stone.

Anniversaries

BIRTHS: William Cecil, Baron Burghley, statesman, Bourne, Lincolnshire, 1520; Gilbert Burnet, Bishop of Salisbury 1689-1715, Edinburgh, 1643; Samuel Johnson, writer, critic and lexicographer, Lichfield, 1709; William Collins, landscape painter, London, 1788; Sir Owen Seaman, poet, Editor of *Punch* 1906-32, London, 1861; John George Diefenbaker, Prime Minister of Canada 1957-63, Grey County, Ontario, 1895; Greta Garbo, actress, Stockholm, 1905.

DEATHS: Matthew Prior, poet, Wimpole, Cambridgeshire, 1721; William Hazlitt, essayist, London, 1830; John Sterling, writer, Ventnor, 1844; Joseph Locke, civil engineer, Moffat, Dumfries, 1860; Dion Boucicault, dramatist and actor, New York, 1890; Armand Hippolyte Fizeau, physicist, Venteuil, 1896; Francis Herbert Bradley, philosopher, Oxford, 1924; Dag Hammarskjold, Secretary-General of the United Nations 1953-61, killed in an air crash, Ndola, Zambia, 1961; Sean O'Casey, dramatist, Torquay, 1964; Sir John Cockcroft, physicist, Nobel laureate 1951, Cambridge, 1967; Jimi Hendrix, rock musician, London, 1970; Katherine Anne Porter, writer, 1980.

The New York Times was first published, 1851.

The Irish Home Rule Bill received Royal Assent, 1914.

France abolished the guillotine, 1981.

Latest wills

Lady (Pamela Fenn) **Oppenheimer**, of London SW3, left estate valued at £4,414,977 net.

Vera Eileen Mary **Chew**, of Dymock, Gloucestershire, left estate valued at £1,972,858 net.

She left £1,000 each to the British Heart Foundation, the Cobalt Unit Appeal Fund, Cheltenham, and the Motor Neurone Disease Association.

Muriel Olive **Squier-Perry**, of Saltdean, Brighton, left estate valued at £1,179,892 net.

Emeric **Treitel**, of London NW9, left estate valued at £1,402,002 net.

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God, create a pure heart for me, and give me a new and stead-fast spirit. Do not drive me from your presence or take your holy spirit from me. Psalm 51 : 10,11

BIRTHS

BOASE - On 15th September 1997 at RUH Bath, to Serena (née Harrison) and Charles, a daughter, Helena Frances Dobree, half-sister to Edward, Andrew and Georgina.

CHAMBERS - On September 11th at The Portland Hospital, to Hugh and Karen, a daughter, Katya Gwendoline Mary, a sister for Aliana.

CLARKE - On September 15th, to Nicola (née White) and Stephen, a son, Louis Stephen Graham, a brother for Olivia, Sam and William.

FALLON - To Erika and Simon on 4th September, a son, Oliver Simon Jasper, a brother for Sebastian and half-brother to Jason, Kate, Georgina and Freddie.

FITZGERALD - On September 16th, to Kate (née Davidson) and Liam, a beautiful daughter, Megan. With thanks to the staff of The John Radcliffe Hospital, Oxford.

HARRIS - On September 15th, to Rachel (née Robinson) and John, a son, Matthew Oliver Birkbeck and a daughter, Nicola Kate.

HUGHES - On September 14th 1997, to Camilla (née Page) and Richard, a daughter, Alice Mary, a sister for William and Edward.

MANN - On September 15th at The Royal Berkshire Hospital, to Rachel (née Downey) and Timothy, a daughter, Alexandra Lydia Jane, a sister for Eleanor and Jessica.

MARTIN - On 2nd September at Princess Anne Hospital, Southampton, to Kate (née Luney) and Paul, a son, Henry David, a brother for Amy Louise and Lucy Ellen.

McMULLAN - On August 9th 1997, to Cathy and Keith, a daughter, Phoebe Clare Niamh, a sister for Siobhan.

MEE - On September 13th at The Portland Hospital, to Harriet and Adrian, a son, Alexander George, a brother for Frank.

NINEBERG - On September 15th at The Portland Hospital, to Lucy and Roger, a son, Dexter Rhys, a brother for Dylan.

PILKINGTON - On September 12th in Dublin, to Caroline (née Talbot-Ponsonby) and Patrick, a son, Oliver George, another brother for Bubie, Jack and Paddy!

PURDY - On September 15th 1997, to Rachel (née Nicholls) and Robert, a daughter, Juliet Isabel Catherine.

STURGESS - On September 15th, to Catherine and Richard, a daughter, Natasha Lily Catherine, a sister for Ben.

VOICE-JOYCE - On 30th August 1997, to Fiona and Christopher, the gift of a beautiful son, Alexander Christopher.

RUBY ANNIVERSARIES

JOHNSON:TOMLINSON - September 18th 1957 at South Shields. Vera to Robert. Our wonderful Mum and Dad. With all our love.

DIAMOND ANNIVERSARIES

PHILLIPS:ROYER - On 18th September 1937 at St Andrew's Whitehall Park, Highgate, John Francis to Olive; still living in North London and sending love and good wishes to family and friends.

DEATHS

ANSELL - Lillian M. (née Yates) passed away on 10th September 1997. A dear friend to many, and in particular to the late Mr Nathan Tuck, OBE of Messrs and Alec Monk and Tuck of London WC2. Letters to A. Bennett & Son, 460-462 Hoe Street, Walthamstow, E17 9AH.

ARMITSTEAD - Pam died peacefully in Yeovil District Hospital on 14th September aged 79. Dearly loved wife of the late Bobby Armitstead, mother of Elizabeth and Edward, and grandmother. Funeral Services at 12 noon on Tuesday 23rd September at Pendomer Church and at All Saints' Church, Richards Castle at 2.30 pm on Wednesday 24th September. Family flowers only, but donations if desired to the Alzheimers Disease Society c/o Harold F Miles, Funeral Director, South Cadbury BA22 7ES, (01963) 440367.

ASHLEY MILLER - On September 15th, in London, Peter Ashley Miller, Royal Navy (Rtd) aged 71, linchpin and matchless companion for 41 years of Jilly. Beloved of his family. Funeral Reedham Thursday September 25th at 12.30. Dress happily. No flowers. Donations in his memory may be sent to Burlingham House, (Reg Charity) Norwich, NR13 4BQ.

BARTON - Mary Dawn (née de Vere Hunt) died suddenly at home on September 13th. Beloved mother of Christopher, Ian, Ann and Paul. Funeral at 1 pm on Friday 19th September at Sands Funeral Chapel, 1 Newcastle Avenue, Nanaimo, V9S 4H6, BC.

BELTON - John Patrick died peacefully at home in London on 8th September aged 62. Journalist and much loved father of Fiona, Siobhan and Aine. He will be sadly missed by his family and friends.

BIGGS - Honor Gerda - on September 15th 1997, peacefully after much suffering, in her 85th year. Interment in the Wolvercote Cemetery, North Oxford on Monday September 22nd at 11 am.

DEATHS

CHAMBERLIN - Jean on Wednesday 16th September in London peacefully after a short illness, widow of the late Joe Chamberlin and beloved friend of Christoph and much loved by her family and many friends. Funeral to take place on Wednesday September 24th at Putney Vale Crematorium at 2.15 pm. All enquiries to Messrs J.E. Kenyon, 49 Marloes Road, Kensington, London W8 6LA, tel: (0171) 937-0757.

CLARK - Margaret Jean on 16th September in her 86th year. Wife of the late Sir Arthur Clark KCMG CBE, dear mother of Christine and Richard, much loved grandmother of Sarah and Kate. Funeral will take place at The Church of St George, Wrotham, Kent at 10 am on Saturday 20th September. Donations to The Heart of Kent Hospice, Preston Hall, Aylesford, Kent ME20 7PU. Flowers and enquiries to Michael Lawrence Undertakers, 93 Kings Street, Maidstone, Kent, tel: (01622) 661678.

COATES - Mary Eleanor on September 16th aged 88 after a short illness, dearly loved wife of the late Pat and mother of Richard and Elizabeth. Funeral Service at 2 pm on Monday September 22nd at the Church of St Mary the Virgin, Barcombe, East Sussex, followed by private cremation at Brighton. Donations if desired to St Peter and St James Hospice, North Chailey, Lewes, BN8 4ED.

COUDERT - Ferdinand aged 88, passed away peacefully on 15th September at his home in Lyme, Connecticut. Sadly missed but happily remembered by his many friends in Europe and Key West. A good companion, bold frenchman and generous host.

COWELL - Barry of Deal, Kent, father of Claire, Andrew and Simon, died suddenly on 15th September 1997 aged 69. Funeral Service at Thanet Crematorium on Friday 19th September at 3.20 pm. No flowers please; donations if desired to The British Heart Foundation.

CULSHAW - Laurence John aged 89 on September 13th 1997. Much loved husband, father and grandfather. Funeral private. A Service to celebrate his life will be held at St Mary's Parish Church, The Causeway, Horsham on 30th September at 11.30 am. No flowers, but donations if wished to: The Amicable Foundation of Christ's Hospital or Horsham Parish Church Restoration Appeal c/o Freeman Brothers, 9 North Parade, Horsham, tel: (01403) 254590.

DICKS - Dorothy Flower. Died unexpectedly but peacefully in Cheltenham Hospital on 14th September 1997. Beloved mother of Charles and Tricia and a ray of sunshine to all who knew her. Family only funeral on 19th September 1997. Donations, if desired, to British Heart Foundation, c/o Mason & Stokes, Hewlett Road, Cheltenham GL52 6AH.

DUNBAR-MASMITH - David Arthur - Rear Admiral, C.B., D.S.C., peacefully at home on 15th September 1997. Beloved husband of Elizabeth, dearly loved father and grandfather. Family flowers only please. Donations, if wished, to British Heart Foundation or King George V Fund for Sailors. For funeral arrangements please contact W.G. Catto Funeral Directors, Elgin 01343 547371.

FERNANT - John Reginald (Rex) F.R.I.C.S. on 16th September, dearly loved husband of Pamela, devoted stepfather and stepgrandfather. Cremation at Mortlake Crematorium, Townmead Road, Richmond, 22nd September at 3.30 pm. Family flowers only. Donations if desired to Cancer Relief Macmillan Fund (Barnes Branch) c/o T.H. Sanders & Sons, 35 High Street, Barnes SW13 9LP.

GARNER - Suddenly but peacefully at his home on 2nd September 1997, Professor John Francis (Jack) aged 83, much loved father of Adrienne and Peter.

GOODENDAY - On 16th September 1997, Edith, the dearly beloved wife of Philip and dearly beloved mother of Richard.

JOYCE - Dr. Timothy Joyce died in New York on 14th September 1997.

LAWRANCE - Jeremy Charles Dalton, suddenly on 16th September. Dearly loved and loving husband, father and grandfather of Ann, Jeremy, Timothy and all his grandchildren. Funeral Service at the Church of St Peter ad Vincula, Wisborough Green, Wednesday September 24th at 2 pm. Family flowers only please. Donations for the Alzheimers Disease Society may be sent c/o W. Snyder & Sons, Tillington, Petworth, West Sussex 01798 342174.

MACLEHMAN - Donald James Henry - Peacefully at Ipswich Hospital on September 15th 1997 aged 93 years. Much loved husband of the late Sybil. Dear father of Angela, and grandfather of Christopher, Jonathan, Antony and Amanda. Funeral Service at Great Glemham Parish Church, Saxmundham, Suffolk. Enquiries to Tony Browns Funeral Service, Saxmundham, Suffolk, tel: 01728 603109. Family flowers please, and donations if desired to a charity of the donor's choice.

MACWALTER - Dr. Roy James O.B.E. of Stow-on-the-Wold, on September 16th 1997 aged 87 years. Husband of the late Evelyn. Formerly of Harrow. Funeral Service at Cheltenham Crematorium on Monday September 22nd at 11.30 am. Donations if desired for Eczema National Society c/o Didcock Funeral Directors (01608) 643434.

McFARLANE - June Margaret of Boxmoor-on-Crouch died on 16th September at The Lawns Nursing Home Chelmsford in her 72nd year. Dearly loved wife and friend of Peter, devoted mother of Nicola, Alexander and Henry and proud grandmamma of their children. Now in peace after many years of distress. Funeral Service at Creeksea Church at 2.30 pm on Tuesday 23rd September. Family flowers only. Donations if desired to Alzheimers Disease Society c/o Stammers Funeral Service, 11 Queen Street, Southminster, Essex.

MERRIMAN - James (Jim) Henry Herbert on 15th September (aged 82) peacefully at Cumberland Nursing Home, Mitcham, Surrey, after an illness borne with great courage and dignity. Darling husband (for 55 years) of Joan, and much loved and treasured father and father-in-law to Anne and Alan, David and Catherine, Brian and Elizabeth. A supremely special and beloved grandpa to Claire, Keith, John, Jane, and Philip. Past President Institution of Electrical Engineers, former Board Member for Technology, Post Office, and past Chairman National Computing Centre. A gifted and respected engineer who combined his deep Christian faith with humility and humour. After a private family cremation, friends and former colleagues welcome at a Service of Thanksgiving at Morden Baptist Church, Morden, Surrey on Monday 22nd September at 2.45 pm. No flowers please, but donations if desired, to Spurgeon's College, or Merton Mind, c/o Frank W. Paine, 6 Coombe Lane, Raynes Park, SW20 8ND.

MONTAGUE-JONES - Michael, in South Africa, on 6th September 1997 after a short illness. Dear son of Aileen and brother to Stephen and Elizabeth. Very sadly missed by all his family, close colleagues and friends. His funeral has taken place.

MUTTER - On Tuesday 16th September 1997 after a long illness, Helen, wife of the late Charles, beloved mother of Anthony, Pru and Noni and devoted grandmother. Funeral on Monday 22nd September at Guildford Crematorium at 10.30 am.

NORRIS - James Thomas (Tom), on 12th September 1997 in a tragic swimming accident age 37, son of Norman and Anne, brother to Anne-Marie, John and Alice, beloved husband of Heidi and loving father to Elizabeth. Funeral service at St Michael and All Angels, Blackheath Park, London SE3 on Monday 22nd September at 12 noon; followed by committal at St Peter ad Vincula, Coggeshall, Essex on Tuesday 23rd September at 12 noon. Family flowers only; donations if desired to the Artists' General Benevolent Institution, Burlington House, Piccadilly, London W1V 0DJ, or to own preferred charity. The family wish to express their appreciation to all Tom's friends.

NORTH - Joan Mabel (née Fussell), late of Lee House Cottage, Broadlands, Romsey. Died peacefully on 16th September 1997, aged 83. Dearly loved wife of the late Cdr. W F G North, mother of Susan, Simon and Jeremy, grandmother of Vanessa, Jonathan, Emma, William, Joseph and Benjamin and great-grandmother of Ella, Alice and Jemima. Please telephone A H Chester (01794-513393) for funeral details. If desired, donations to Alzheimers Disease Society c/o A H Chester, 122 The Hundred, Romsey, Hampshire SO51 8BY.

PRINCE - Ralph Bacon late Loyal Reg't, on 17th September aged 83 years at Leckhampton Court, Cheltenham. Much loved father to John and Jeremy and grandfather to Christopher, Imogen and Naomi. Enquiries to Mason & Stokes (01242) 224877.

ROMENSKY - Catherine, conference interpreter, died in Paris on September 14th, aged 62 years. A sad loss for her brother Serge, sister-in-law Maria and sister Maude, 127, rue de Sèvres, 75006 Paris. "As for man, his days are as grass; as a flower of the field, so he flourisheth. For the wind passeth over it, and it is gone." (Ps. 103).

WALKER - John Lionel on 15th September 1997 at home. Loving husband of Judith and father of Ben, Richard and Sarah. Funeral Service 12 noon, Friday 19th September at Irstead Church, Irstead Shoals. All welcome. "May his soul sing".

IN MEMORIAM — PRIVATE

HAYWARD - S.E.P. A year ago today Simon set off on his long journey. Deeply missed by those he loved.

RHYS-WILLIAMS - In loving memory of Juliet Rhys-Williams DBE who died on 18th September 1964.

BIRTHDAYS

SOPHIE PLATFORD is Eighteen today. Happy Birthday. Love M, D & C.

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

OSMAR - The Revd H. R. Osmar of Brighead today celebrates the Golden Jubilee of his ordination to the ministry of The Presbyterian Church.

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LEGAL NOTICES

IPI GROUP LIMITED (IN ADMINISTRATIVE RECEIVERSHIP)
NOTICE TO CREDITORS
A meeting of the creditors of IPI Group Limited is to be held at 10.00am on 29 September 1997 in Room G58, Price Waterhouse, 10-18 Union Street, London SE1 1SZ under the provisions of Section 48 of the Insolvency Act 1986. The purpose of this meeting is to receive the report of the receivers and if the creditors wish to do so, to appoint a committee of creditors.
Creditors who have not received notice of the meeting and wish to attend should contact the receivers' office on 0171 939 3000 and ask for Duncan Sawyer. Any creditors requiring a copy of the report (which is available free of charge) should write to No 1 London Bridge, London SE1 9QL.
Creditors whose claims are wholly secured are not entitled to attend or be represented at the meeting.
MD Gercke
Joint administrative receiver
10 September 1997

The Insolvency Act 1986
VICTORIA CATERING CO. LIMITED
NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN pursuant to Section 98 of the Insolvency Act 1986 that a MEETING of the CREDITORS of the above named Company will be held on 13th October 1997 at 4 Charterhouse Square, London EC1M 6EN at 12.00 noon for the purposes mentioned in Section 99 of the said Act.
NOTICE IS FURTHER GIVEN that Maurice Raymond Dorrington, FIPA, of Poppleton & Appleby, 4 Charterhouse Square, London, EC1M 6EN is appointed to act as the qualified Insolvency Practitioner for the purposes pursuant to Section 98(2)(c) of the said Act who will furnish creditors, free of charge, with such information concerning the Company's affairs as they may reasonably require.
Dated this 10th day of September 1997
By Order of the Board
L Blundell, Director

NOTICE TO THE CREDITORS OF ESTWIC PRODUCTS LIMITED - IN LIQUIDATION
The Liquidators of Estwic Products Limited give notice under the provisions of Rule 4.186 and Rule 11.2 of the Insolvency Rules 1986 that they intend to pay a first and final dividend to the unsecured creditors of the company on 30 November 1997.
Creditors who have not already done so must send details, in writing, of any claim against the company to the liquidators Roger Marsh and Gordon Christopher Hornfield of Price Waterhouse at 9 Bond Court, Leeds, LS1 2SN by 17 October 1997, which is the last day for submitting claims. A creditor who does not make a claim by that date will not be included in the proposed final distribution.
R Marsh
Joint Liquidator
3 September 1997

TO ALL WHOM IT MAY CONCERN
TRADE NOTICE THAT I CHRISTOPHER TURNBULL of 521, Lexington Building, The Bow Quarter, Fairfield Road, Bow, London, E3 2UF having for the last six months carried on the trade or calling of Company Director and being a person interested in the premises described below intend to apply at the Transfer Sessions to be held at Thames Magistrates Court, 58, Bow Road, Bow, London, E3, on the 6th day of October, 1997 at 10 o'clock in the forenoon for the provisional grant to me of a Justices' Licence authorising me to sell by retail intoxicating liquor of all descriptions for consumption off the premises situate at Dundee Wharf Site E at the site at the junction of Three Colt Street and Milligan Street, London, E.14, and to be known by the sign of Chambions a plan of which premises has been deposited with the Clerk to the Licensing Justices together with this notice, of which premises Baltimore (Dundee Wharf) Limited is the Owner.
Dated the 12th day of September

OBITUARIES

ALDO ROSSI

Aldo Rossi, Italian architect, died after a car crash on September 4 aged 66. He was born in Milan on May 3, 1931.



With Carlo Scarpa and Giancarlo Di Carlo, Aldo Rossi was one of a select group of Italian architects to have won and retained worldwide renown. His buildings are found not only in his native Milan but in Germany, The Netherlands, Japan and North America. In London he designed two buildings for Canary Wharf and, though these fell victim to the recession, he had recently been commissioned to design a third. Better known than his buildings are the coffee pot he designed for Alessi and a handsome watch with a Big Ben face.

His sudden death, at one of the most productive periods of his life, has similarities with that of Sir James Stirling; Rossi, a diabetic, died after a car crash, not from his injuries, but from medical complications.

His reputation, like that of Stirling, soared thanks to his fertility as a draughtsman and importance as a thinker. During his early years his reputation grew from his teachings and writings. Much of his early advocacy was done through magazines, notably *Casabella-continuità*. His classic book *L'Architettura della Città* (1966), translated into English only in 1982, ranks with Robert Venturi's *Complexity and Contradiction in Architecture* as one of the key texts in the battle to bring a human face to international Modernism.

Rejecting the Corbusian vision of a city of towers, based on a clean sweep of everything old, Rossi emphasised that cities had evolved over time and were full of history that had to be respected; sensitive new architecture had to grow from a knowledge of the past. He showed how modern buildings could be sensitively introduced in old cities and how old buildings could be creatively re-used without resort to mere façadism.

He was a great advocate of the urban neighbourhood, exerting a strong influence on architects from Spain's Rafael Moneo to Luxembourg's Rob and Leon Krier. He consistently rejected the label of Post-Modernism. "How can I be Post-Modern when I was never a Modern?" he used to ask.

Rossi's buildings have a memorable, gently monumental character. Not for him reflective glass or high-tech transparency. He liked solid walls and elemental geometry — the square, the cylinder, the pyramid and the cone: Platonic form not organic shapes. He admired Boullée and Ledoux, architects of the French Enlightenment.

Many of his buildings have towers or loggias, or are finished with cornices as powerful as those of any Medici palace in Florence. His signature was the square or nearly square window, with square panes. In recent years, he made increasing use of colour, with a palette of red, yellow and black. In an age when exposed concrete was the favoured material of many architects, he preferred red brick.

A number of acclaimed early housing schemes, notably the Gallaratese apartments in Milan, were followed by the evocative municipal cemetery at Modena. His most beautiful and poetic project was the Teatro del Mondo, a floating stage for the Venice Biennale in 1980. *Painted in blue and yellow, it* had the simple form of a giant octagonal pencil case.

Soon after, he completed the reconstruction of the bomb-damaged opera house in Genoa. An earlier project by Carlo Scarpa had foundered. Rossi triumphantly resolved the challenge of a huge flytower, giving it a simple classic dignity echoing Genoa's famous Renaissance palaces. Inside, the flanks of the auditorium were treated as buildings around a square, with wooden balconies and galleries projecting from stone façades.

GRANGE BOOKS



Monumental yet poetic buildings designed by Aldo Rossi in Perugia

In Japan Rossi was responsible for designing the stylish Palace Hotel in Fukuoka, a powerful contemporary interpretation of the 19th-century cast-iron buildings found in Manhattan. In Maastricht he had recently completed a new museum with a rocket-like tower that fitted as well into the Dutch landscape as any windmill.

At times his work was criticised for lack of attention to detail and an excessive concern with reducing everything to the simplest possible shape. The solitariness of his stand-alone buildings had its origin in paintings of De Chirico.

Rossi himself wrote: "I have always claimed that places are stronger than people, the fixed scene stronger than the transitory succession of events. This is the theoretical basis not of my architecture, but of architecture itself." He was respected all the more for being a tortured, self-questioning soul, constantly on the verge of giving up architecture altogether.

He is survived by his wife, a son and a daughter.

LADY BRADMAN

Lady Bradman, wife of the Australian cricketer Sir Don Bradman, died on September 14 aged 88. She was born on June 11, 1909.



JESSIE BRADMAN was best known as the wife of Sir Don Bradman, by general consent the greatest cricketer of his time. But she was a "star", as one of their friends described her, in her own right. Bradman himself once characterised their marriage as "the greatest partnership of my life". It was true. During the "bodyline" series of 1932-33, the breakdown of his health in 1934 and again in the years of the Second World War, and during the long years of his retirement, Jessie was a constant and faithful — but not always uncritical — companion, friend and ally.

Bradman's cricketing career is well known; what is less well known is his comment "I could not have done without her". Towards the end of her life, when she was going into hospital for one of many operations, she went out without telling him and bought two young roses, which she gave to her husband to plant in their garden in case she did not return. The gesture reveals her character: openly affectionate, thoughtful, cheerful but realistic.

Jessie Martha Menzies was the eldest of three daughters born to a farming family at Glenquarry in the Southern Highlands of New South Wales. Her grandfather had been a Scottish stonemason, recruited by the colonial government to work on the building of Sydney University in return for a grant of land, and her father, his son, had farmed that land. The nearest town of any size was Bowral, and it was there, in 1921, that Jessie met her future husband. As a new pupil at Bowral school, she had to find accommodation for a year until her sisters were old enough to accompany her on what was then a hazardous cross-country journey. It was the Bradman family that gave her bed and board.

After a childhood and adolescent friendship at first in Bowral and then in the Sydney suburbs, where Jessie studied at a business college and went on to work at the Commonwealth Bank, the couple married at the end of April 1932. Their honeymoon was spent, unconventionally, on a cricket tour to North America. After that rather glamorous start to married life (Jessie particularly enjoyed meeting many of the film stars of the day in Hollywood), the problems of the "bodyline" dispute, in terms both of the future of cricket and of Bradman's health, as well as the financial insecurity of the 1930s, began to crowd in.

In all these worries, Jessie Bradman clearly saw her role as a support to her husband and the provider of a home. She was quite content to remain in the background. Even when her husband was at the height of his fame she was reluctant to come forward, or even to give interviews to the press. She took, however, his knighthood, which came to him in 1949 after his retirement, fully in her stride, despite the change of status it implied for her, too.

Retirement suited Jessie. She settled down with her husband in their comfortable home in the Adelaide suburb of Kensington. There were, however, shadows. Their first child, a boy, had died in infancy in 1935; their second, John, nearly died of polio in the early 1950s and subsequently decided to change his name to avoid constant recognition as the son of his father; their daughter Shirley was born with cerebral palsy.

Jessie herself underwent heart surgery in 1974 and latterly endured a prolonged course of treatment for cancer. But, despite the shadows, the Bradman family remained closely knit: Jessie at the centre, in her home and her garden, in later years with her two grandchildren, content with the simple life into which she had been born. In truth, it was probably all she had ever wanted.

She leaves her husband, son and daughter.

LEON EDEL

Leon Edel, biographer of Henry James, died on September 5 aged 89. He was born on September 9, 1907.

LEON EDEL pioneered the study of Henry James, about whom he wrote one of the longest of 20th-century biographies. He was a versatile student of literature, and also wrote books about Joyce, Thoreau, "the psychological novel" and the Bloomsbury Group.

He will be remembered for his explorations into the massive accumulations of James's letters in libraries and private hands, a significant collection of which he published. But his crowning achievement is the five-volume life of James published between 1953 and 1972. In addition, he edited collections of James's stories, plays, and critical writings and provided prefaces to the many textbook editions of the novels.

He was the first biographer to set out James's life on an appropriate scale, at a time when — after a long gap — the novelist was just beginning to be appreciated again. Edel's work grew in importance along with the modern fame of the American writer, who had lived in England for his last 40 years.

Edel's biography was based *on prolonged searching in* archives and the pursuit of buried details. Edel travelled to all the many places James had visited, and, having begun his study in the 1930s, was able to seize fragments of the vanished past by talking to people who had known James. The resulting narrative was made vivid by its successful evocation of small moments in *James's sedentary and reclusive existence.* Edel discovered a social James who knew and took a warm interest in many people and moved about in society.

Writing with lucid grace, Edel composed a story of James's inner development which possessed considerable drama. *Henry James* received two Pulitzer Prizes for biography, and a National Book Award. It was widely read, particularly after it was condensed into two volumes in 1977 and into one in 1985.

Edel's dedication to James began early and persisted. Born in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, he went to McGill University, Montreal, and then to the Sorbonne, where he wrote dissertations on James's prefaces and on the largely forgotten plays; in 1936 he had a Guggenheim fellowship to work on an edition of the plays, which was published in 1949. After a stint on newspapers, and war service in Europe with the US Army, he began teaching at New York University in 1950. He produced a James bibliography (with Dan Lawrence, 1957) and editions of James's *Tales* in 12 volumes (1962-64), some selected letters in 1956, and, finally, four volumes of them between 1974 and 1984. The Bodley Head Henry James in 11 volumes (1967-74) contained prefaces by Edel, who also edited the diary of James's sister Alice in 1965.

As his writings on James multiplied, his university named him "Henry James Professor" in 1966. He moved to the University of Hawaii in 1973 and continued his



labours, editing James's criticism (1984) and notebooks (1987). He was elected to the National Institute of Arts and Letters, the American Academy of Arts and Letters and became a Fellow of the Royal Society of Literature.

Edel's stature as a Jamesian reflected his merits. But his standing was unique for a reason not generally known: he had the field to himself for more than thirty years. No serious attempt to write a life of James could be made while Edel was at work on his, or while he was editing the letters. During the long period when he worked on these books, he alone had unrestricted use of, and the right to publish, any of the thousands of James's manuscript letters at Harvard and elsewhere.

Edel's special relationship with the James family had begun when his Sorbonne thesis came to the attention of the novelist's nephew and he had been invited to rummage in the trunks of family papers. The prolonged exclusivity he was then granted allowed him to prohibit rival projects.

Some of Edel's friends joked that his passion became not merely a love affair but a marriage. He wore a ring that once belonged to the writer. He guarded his beloved against rivals, insisting upon his privilege. He sometimes identified with James as though he were his reincarnation.

This fiercely maintained monopoly was a disservice, not only to other scholars, but even to himself. The privilege was abused, and consequently the work suffered, with errors of judgment resulting from an excess of pride.

The first new biography, prepared with unrestricted use of primary sources, Fred Kaplan's *Henry James: The Imagination of Genius*, was not published until 1992. As Kaplan writes: "Edel sincerely seemed to think that what he had written was the final word. Perhaps that is why he was involved in judgments and actions that were not always kind and generous to other people. His exclusivity went far beyond the temporary priority that biographers sometimes enjoy. His hold on the materials of James biography had a damaging effect on James scholarship for many years."

Time exposes the limitations even of great achievement. James's extant letters have been said to number more than 10,000, and Nebraska University intends to publish a complete correspondence, perhaps on the Internet. Edel's gathering included only a little over 1,200, and the selection is arbitrary and often imperfectly transcribed.

The biography had its shortcomings. It could be objected that that Edel's Freudian psychologising implied, without any real basis, that James had been oppressed by a sibling rivalry with his brother William. In treating James's sexualtiy, Edel was timid or rash by turns. At first he postulated a long celibacy for James, then decided, without proof, that the aged James released his longings in relations with younger men.

The Edel biography is, too, peculiarly barren of a sense of political and social history. Its charming vignettes of James at numerous moments have seemed focused on the trivial, whereas the verdict of more recent interpreters is that James took a great interest in social and economic events.

Edel was three times married and twice divorced. He is survived by his third wife Marjorie. There were no children.

PERSONAL COLUMN

LEGAL NOTICES

WATERMARK LEISURE LIMITED (IN ADMINISTRATIVE RECEIVERSHIP)
NOTICE TO CREDITORS
A meeting of the creditors of Watermark Leisure Limited is to be held at 10.00am on 29 September 1997 in Room G50, Price Waterhouse, 10-18 Union Street, London SE1 1SZ under the provisions of Section 48 of the Insolvency Act 1986. The purpose of this meeting is to receive the report of the receivers and if the creditors wish to do so, to appoint a committee of creditors. Creditors who have not received notice of the meeting and wish to attend should contact the receivers' office on 0171 939 3000 and ask for Duncan Sawyer. Any creditors requiring a copy of the report (which is available free of charge) should write to No 1 London Bridge, London SE1 9GE.
Creditors whose claims are wholly secured are not entitled to attend or be represented at the meeting.
MD Gercke
Joint administrative receiver
10 September 1997

ANNOUNCEMENTS

SERIOUS Orchestral/Classical music composer seeks benefactor. Please reply Box No 7109

MEET SOMEONE THROUGH THE TIMES / THE SUNDAY TIMES CLASSIFIED 0171 481 4000

THE LIBERAL CATHOLIC CHURCH ANNOUNCES
The Consecration to the Episcopate of the Rt. Rev. Richard Amber Palmer, B.M., B.A. as Auxiliary Bishop of the Province of Great Britain & Ireland in the chapel of Royal Holloway, Egham on Saturday 20th September at 11am

WITH grateful thanks to the Sacred Heart of Jesus and St Jude for favours recieved. N.M.O.

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NATIONAL RADIO EXHIBITION

DROP IN PRICES OF SETS
FROM OUR WIRELESS CORRESPONDENT

The National Radio Exhibition will be opened at Olympia this morning at 11 o'clock, and will remain open until September 26. The latest developments in wireless receivers, from a "Baby Portable" that can be slipped in the hip pocket to a radio-gramophone 12ft. high, will be exhibited on five miles of stands. The total floor space occupied is three times as great as last year and makes this year's show the largest radio exhibition in the world.

The exhibition of wireless apparatus organized by the British Radio Manufacturers' Association cannot fail to be of interest to all broadcast listeners, whether they be technically minded or not. This exhibition has now become recognized as the annual expression of technical progress in wireless receiver design as well as a seasonal stimulus to business in what has become a great national industry.

Turning now to individual sets, pride of place must naturally be given to the *de luxe* models incorporating a wireless receiver and electrically driven gramophone. The Marconiphone *Radio-Autogram*, at 52 guineas, combines a six-valve superheterodyne receiver, together with a gramophone embodying the new automatic record-changing mechanism. Accommodating any number of records up to eight, this model will provide over half an hour's continuous music without any attention. The Marconiphone Super-heterogram, at 45 guineas, is very similar to the Radio-Autogram, except that the record-changing mechanism is not included. It employs "band pass" tuning and a moving-coil loud-speaker. Facilities for connecting an additional speaker are included. The chassis is mounted in a handsome dark walnut cabinet. An exceedingly low-priced Columbia radio-gramophone is the Model 602, at 32 guineas. This set includes the standard Columbia electric pick-up and moving coil loud speaker fed on the radio side by a set with band-pass tuning. The General Electric Company are exhibiting the Gecophone all-electric radio-gramophone for AC mains at 40 guineas. This provides a four-valve radio set giving excellent reproduction. The walnut cabinet of this set is particularly attractive.

The firm of E.K. Cole, who for years now have specialised in all-electric sets and components, are showing the Ekco Model RG5 at 43 guineas. This radio-gramophone, housed in a walnut cabinet, is equipped with a four valve chassis and the latest type of turntable and pick up. The AC model costs about a farthing an hour to run. The RG6 model is similar except that it is supplied complete with Radiocorder outfit and microphone, so that with it one can make one's own gramophone records. The price of the complete RG6 outfit is 50 guineas. The Marconiphone Radiogram 111, at 32 guineas, is of interest because, although it comprises only three valve stages, these have been designed to give maximum efficiency, so that the performance equals that of many last year's models employing more valves.

ON THIS DAY

September 18, 1931

By 1931 "the wireless" was becoming "the radio"; no longer a contraption of wires and batteries it was more frequently run "off the mains"; radiograms with automatic record-changing gear were appearing which, housed in handsome walnut cabinets, could hold their own with the best furniture in the house.

THE TIMES TODAY THURSDAY SEPTEMBER 18 1997

NEWS

New deal for rape victims

■ Rape victims may be allowed to give evidence from behind screens and protected from prurient cross-examination as part of a drive to bring more sex attackers to justice.

Police, MPs and women's groups are all pressing the Home Secretary to act after the release of figures yesterday showing a dramatic rise in the number of rapes and sexual assaults reported to the police coupled with a fall in the number of trials and convictions..... **Page 1**

Princess's car may have hit another

■ The Mercedes in which Diana, Princess of Wales, made her final journey may have hit another car before crashing into a concrete pillar. Fragments of the plastic brake light from a Fiat Uno have been found close to pieces of the Mercedes's headlamp and wing mirror..... **Pages 1, 5**

Stalker sentenced

A former Army engineer waged a stalking campaign against his former girlfriend, using military skills to bug her telephone and stake out her home..... **Page 1**

US landmine row

America refused to sign a treaty banning landmines. President Clinton said that he could not sign a document that failed to accept the responsibilities of the only superpower..... **Pages 1, 16**

A step towards PR

The Liberal Democrats claimed that they had reached agreement with Labour to press ahead with the first steps towards proportional representation..... **Page 2**

Midge, 65, owns up

There was no doubt about the culprit when someone broke down the church door and cut the bell ropes. Midge Mather, 65, telephoned every member of the parochial church council to tell them what she had done.. **Page 3**

Referendum battle

John Prescott and William Hague tried to invigorate the Welsh devolution campaign amid signs that apathy could be the main factor..... **Page 4**

Millennium design

Fifty arbiters of style and form are to decide which are the most brilliant new British innovations to be trumpeted around the world to mark the millennium.. **Page 6**

Women at the top

The fight to become the next Irish president turned into a women-only battle after Albert Reynolds, the former Prime Minister, was rejected by his party in favour of a Belfast academic..... **Page 9**

Water marketing

Bottled water is an expensive marketing trick and sometimes contains bacteria that make it less healthy than tap water, it was claimed..... **Page 10**

Brazzaville fighting

Helicopters strafed the already shattered streets of Brazzaville with rockets and cannon fire as fighting between troops and militias escalated in a push for control of the city..... **Page 15**

Versace fortune

The fashion world was stunned by the revelation that Gianni Versace, the designer shot dead in Miami Beach, had left the bulk of his fortune to his 11-year-old niece Allegra..... **Page 17**

Minister on pot

Dominique Voynet, the outspoken French Environment Minister, has called for legalisation of cannabis and admitted smoking marijuana..... **Page 18**

Israeli dilemma

The Israeli Government was involved in increasingly desperate talks to defuse the confrontation over Jewish settlement in east Jerusalem..... **Page 19**

Everton Supporters 1, Everton FC 0

■ When supporters of Everton football club discovered that the shirts they were wearing were not exact replicas of the ones the players were sporting, they cried foul. It transpired that it was the players who were wearing the wrong shirts. The outcry began when it appeared that the stripes on the replicas were not the same way up as those on the players' shirts..... **Page 1**

JEAN-CHRISTOPHE KAHN / Reuters



Sightseers yesterday examining the place in a Paris underpass where Diana, Princess of Wales, was fatally injured. **Page 1**

BUSINESS

Economy: The City is braced for further interest rate rises after new data showed unemployment at a seventeen year low and the high street spending boom continuing unabated..... **Page 27**

Kingfisher: Surging sales at B&Q, Kingfisher's DIY chain, helped to lift the retail group's interim earnings by a forecast-beating 36 per cent..... **Page 27**

Gas: BG, the demerged pipeline and exploration division of British Gas, confirmed it is to give £1.3 billion to investors..... **Page 27**

Markets: The FTSE 100 rose 36.7 points to close at 5013.1. Sterling's trade-weighted index rose from 99.1 to 99.5 after rises from $1.5939 to $1.6024 and from DM2.8183 to DM2.8327..... **Page 30**

SPORT

Motor racing: Damon Hill has been dropped by the Arrows team for next season, when his place will be taken by Miko Salo, of Finland. Hill may join Jordan..... **Page 52**

Football: England, who are seventh, are now five places above their World Cup rivals, Italy, in the latest Fifa world rankings. **Page 52**

Rugby union: Clive Woodward, the new England coach, will have as his assistant John Mitchell, the New Zealand back-row forward who has enjoyed success with Sale..... **Page 49**

Cricket: Glamorgan go to Taunton aiming for maximum points from their final county championship match. Anything less will open the way for Kent to take the title by beating Surrey..... **Page 50**

ARTS

Masterly Moor: Sam Mendes's offers a thrilling new production of *Othello* at the National Theatre, with Simon Russell Beale outstanding as Iago..... **Page 38**

Leigh's girls: Mike Leigh continues his exploration of the North London psyche in *Career Girls*. The best Hollywood movie is *My Best Friend's Wedding*, with Julia Roberts in comic mode..... **Page 39**

Strauss and I: In the final extract from his autobiography, the late Sir Georg Solti recalls a memorable lunch with the composer Richard Strauss..... **Page 40**

Men in tutus: You don't have to be female to dress up in a tutu and perform *Swan Lake*, as the New York-based Ballets Trockaderos prove in London..... **Page 41**

FEATURES

Dr Thomas Stuttaford: Alzheimer's costs Britain £11.5 billion a year, accounting for 75 per cent of all cases of dementia..... **Page 20**

Political shadows: Once the wife was a pearl-bedecked typist and becoming awfully good at fêtes. Now times have caught up with politicians' partners..... **Page 21**



TOMORROW

IN THE TIMES

■ POP
David Sinclair finds that you can take Björk out of Iceland, but you can't take Iceland out of Björk's music

■ EDUCATION
An end to the government honeymoon with the teaching profession?

FOCUS

Fast mover: Since the Soviet empire, Kazakhstan has embarked on privatisation..... **Pages 35-37**

BOOKS

Reviews: Russell Celyn Jones on Martin Amis's *Night Train*; Peter Ackroyd on Jane Austen books; andKenneth Baker on the recent past..... **Pages 42, 43**

TRAVEL

Best buys: New York return for £178, half-price business class to Sydney..... **Page 44**

Ski bonus: The windfall factor is sending Britons skiing..... **Page 45**

THE PAPERS

The Americans believe in their constitution, the Germans in the mark, the British in the Union Jack. Our confidence goes first of all to the nation. It will be said that it is an abstraction; that one cannot clothe oneself with dreams. These are objections that have no meaning for our compatriots — *Le Figaro*

RADIO & TV

Review: Joe Joseph with an alternative voiceover for *The Antiques Show* (BBC1) **Preview:** Gerry Conlon, one of the Guildford Four, talks about his experiences in *Films of Fire: How Far Home?* (Channel 4, 9.00pm)..... **Pages 50, 51**

OPINION

Bright Wednesday

It is fitting that the best economic figures seen in Britain for more than two decades should have been published on the fifth anniversary of Black Wednesday. Since then Britain has seen strong economic growth and a steady reduction in unemployment. This is a history lesson which the Labour Government must not forget..... **Page 23**

Hit and miss

Airlines have done much to assure passengers that their planes are safe; much more must be done if that assurance is to extend to the skies as well..... **Page 23**

Art Sensation

The purpose of any new art movement — in so far as it can be said to have a purpose — is to unsettle and challenge. New British artists forge their links with tradition even as they strive to break them..... **Page 23**

COLUMNS

WILLIAM REES-MOGG
No one questions that Shirley Porter has been the object of prejudice. She is Jewish, and subliminal anti-semitism is part of British culture..... **Page 22**

IAIN DUNCAN SMITH
Labour seems to be pulling in different directions over welfare reform, from greater compulsion in pension contributions to ending or keeping means-testing..... **Page 22**

LORD CALLAGHAN
Economic and social conditions must be created in which private investment will flow as willingly to the sub-Sahara as it does to other developing countries..... **Page 22**

OBITUARIES

Aldo Rossi, architect; **Leon Edel**, Henry James biographer; **Lady Bradman**, Sir Don's wife..**Page 25**

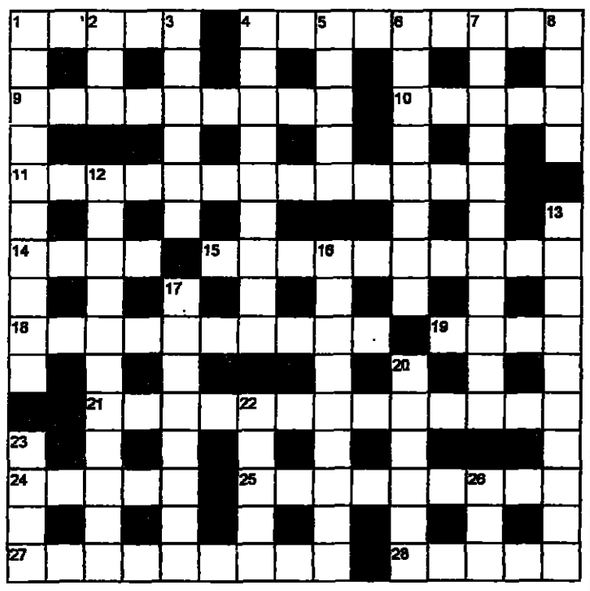
LETTERS

Welsh devolution; RA; appointing bishops; Russian visas; neo-Nazi sentence; Irish clocks..... **Page 23**

LOTTERY NUMBERS

7, 20, 21, 22, 40, 44. Bonus: 4

THE TIMES CROSSWORD NO 20,588



ACROSS

1 Substitute taking part in practice sessions, perhaps (5).
4 Receives first part of television broadcast yielding little information (9).
9 Soldier eating a coarse biscuit (9).
10 Give way to delay (5).
11 It gives one a hot tip for joining golf club after one leaves army service (9,4).
14 Ancient island with a resort (4).
15 Pushed for university in more ancient setting in Slough (10).
18 Version of holy book revised in Leo's papacy (10).
19 Charges resulting when sides of bacon go missing (4).
21 Neutral states (3-10).
24 Rise in region reported (5).
25 Claim by Windsor mistress at beginning of book (5-4).

DOWN

1 In a pub one understands point of dealing with organisation (10).
2 Raised police dog (3).
3 Swarmed around, gathering litter (6).
4 Tinker goes round like mischievous child, greedily (9).
5 Stick to cold fish (5).
6 Fabulous place where the Spanish artist gets into parties (8).
7 In the cooler, hear fellow soldier (11).
8 Nobleman associated with court in London (4).
12 Member of military force cracking up in alien region (11).
13 Repugnance of overdrawn head receiving reminders of debt (10).
16 It's unpleasant when ugly hints are spread abroad (9).
17 Pot or container on top of broken basin (8).
20 Block the path of some dim pedestrian (6).
22 Started to smoke, being soaked (3,2).
23 Wordless sort of singer brooded about note (4).
26 A silence in the wood (3).
27 Extremely holy man's work at start of religious system (9).
28 Characteristic spirit of Englishman when made to look small (5).

Solution to Puzzle No 20,587

M	E	D	O	C		H	E	A	D	C	O	U	N	T
A		E		U		O		C		L		N		E
S	H	A	L	L	O	W	E	R		A	F	F	I	X
S		L		P		Z		I		U		E		A
M	O	T	O	R	W	A	Y	M	A	D	N	E	S	S
E		I		T		O		I		L				
D	E	A	R	T	H		A	N	N	A	L	I	S	T
I		L		R		Y				N		R		
A	N	T	I	G	U	A	N		S	T	I	G	M	A
		E		A		C		F		E				I
P	E	R	E	G	R	I	N	E	F	A	L	C	O	N
L		C		S		N		N		S		O		B
A	P	A	R	T		E	N	C	H	I	L	A	D	A
N		T		E		S		E		N		T		N
T	H	E	O	R	I	S	E	D		G	R	I	N	D

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Times Two Crossword, page 52

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HOURS OF DARKNESS

Sun rises: 6.40 am
Sun sets: 7.08 pm
Moon sets 8.40 am
Moon rises 8.12 pm

Last quarter September 23
London 7.08 pm to 6.42 am
Bristol 7.18 pm to 6.51 am
Edinburgh 7.23 pm to 6.52 am
Manchester 7.18 pm to 6.49 am
Penzance 7.29 pm to 7.04 am

NEWSPAPERS SUPPORT RECYCLING
Recycled paper made up 43.6% of the raw material for UK newspapers in the second half of 1996

FORECAST

☐ **General:** Scotland will have a chilly day with good sunny spells and a few showers. Northern Ireland should have some sunny spells, but with a risk of showers later. The South and East of England will be mainly dry with fog patches clearing to leave some hazy sunshine. Wales and western England should have a lot of dry weather, but thickening cloud may bring showers later.
☐ **London, SE England, E Anglia, Central S England, E Midlands, E England, Channel Isles, Central N England:** cloudy at times, but dry with occasional sunny breaks. A light and variable wind. Max 23C (73F).
☐ **W Midlands, N Wales, NW England, Lake District, Isle of Man:** some early sunshine, but clouding over bringing a risk of showers later. A light northeast wind. Max 19C (66F).
☐ **SW England, S Wales:** mostly fine with sunny periods, but thickening cloud may bring some light rain this afternoon. A light east to southeast wind. Max 21C (70F).
☐ **NE England:** mainly fine with sunny spells, but a chance of a shower. A light to moderate north wind. Max 19C (66F).
☐ **Borders, Edinburgh & Dundee, SW Scotland, Glasgow, Central Highlands, Argyll:** cool, dry and sunny after a cold start. Light north wind. Max 16C (61F).
☐ **Aberdeen, Moray Firth, N Scotland, Orkney, Shetland:** cool with a few showers mixed with sunny spells. A moderate northwest wind. Max 13C (55F).
☐ **N Ireland:** fine with sunny spells, but cloud will gather in the south this afternoon bringing a risk of showers. A moderate north to northeast wind. Max 16C (61F).
☐ **Republic of Ireland:** cloudy with rain at times. Wind easterly moderate, locally fresh. Cooler. Max 17C (63F).
☐ **Outlook:** mainly dry and settled.

AROUND BRITAIN

24 hrs to 5 pm: b=bright; c=cloud; d=drizzle; ds=dust storm; du=dull; f=fair; fg=fog; g=gale; h=hail; r=rain; sh=shower; sl=sleet; sn=snow; s=sun; t=thunder

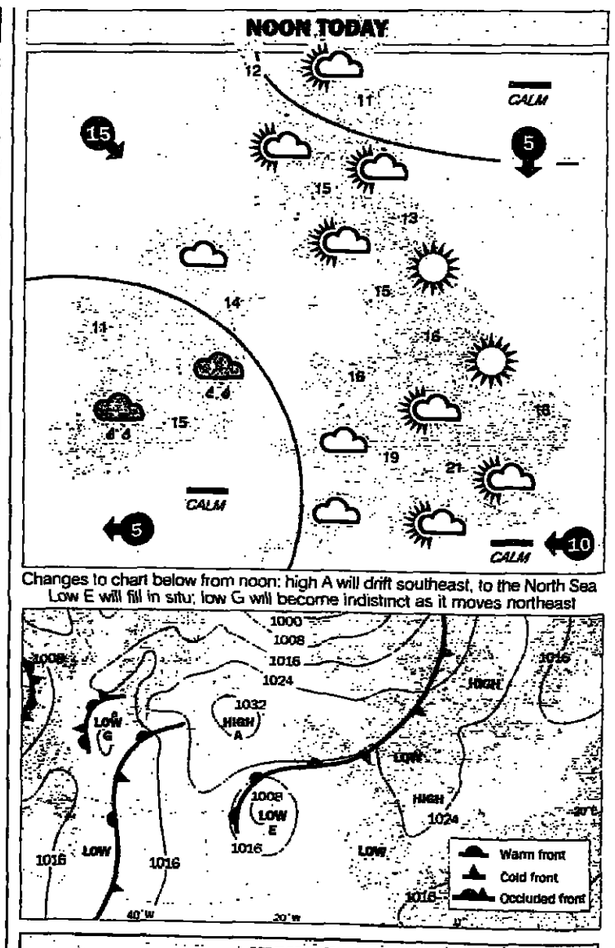
	Sun hrs	Rain in	C	Max F			Sun hrs	Rain in	C	Max F	
Aberdeen	9.8	-	16	61	s	Isle-of-wight	10.4	-	20	68	s
Anglesey	5.8	0.35	17	63	s	Jersey	10.6	-	24	75	s
Aspatria	9.1	0.40	16	61	c	Kinloss	5.5	-	15	59	b
Aviemore	7.7	0.01	14	57	b	Leeds	9.2	0.01	21	70	s
Belfast	8.2	0.03	16	61	s	Leuchars	8.5	-	17	63	s
Birmingham	2.9	0.01	20	68	c	Littlehmptn	9.9	-	21	70	s
Bognor R	10.4	-	22	72	s	London	5.1	-	21	70	b
Bournem'th	10.6	-	21	70	s	Lowestoft	7.4	-	19	66	s
Bristol	2.6	0.01	21	70	b	Manchester	7.7	0.03	18	64	s
Buxton	8.0	0.04	19	66	s	Margate	9.1	-	20	68	s
Cardiff	3.1	0.01	19	66	d	Minehead	5.9	-	19	66	b
Clacton	9.6	-	17	63	s	Morecambe	7.4	0.43	17	63	s
Cleethorpes	9.7	-	17	63	s	Newcastle	8.4	0.01	17	63	s
Colwyn Bay	6.5	0.22	15	59	s	Newquay	9.1	-	20	68	s
Cromer	8.9	-	17	63	s	Norwich	8.6	-	22	72	s
Dunbar	0.7	0.01	16	61	b	Oxford	1.7	-	19	66	c
Eastbourne	9.7	-	20	68	s	Penzance	X	-	19	66	s
Edinburgh	7.9	0.01	17	63	s	Poole	9.8	-	23	73	s
Eskdalemuir	7.4	0.19	16	61	c	Ross-o-wye	1.5	0.01	18	64	c
Exmouth	10.5	-	18	64	s	Salcombe	9.7	-	19	66	s
Falmouth	6.4	-	18	64	b	Saunton Snd	6.9	-	22	72	s
Fishguard	2.0	0.10	16	61	d	Scarboro'	10.5	0.01	20	68	s
Folkestone	10.1	-	20	68	s	Skegness	9.0	-	17	63	s
Glasgow	8.9	0.01	15	59	s	Southend	6.0	-	20	68	c
Guernsey	8.9	-	23	73	s	Stornoway	3.9	0.03	14	57	sh
Hastings	9.0	-	19	66	s	Swanage	10.6	-	19	66	s
Hayling I.	10.1	-	19	66	s	Teignmouth	10.8	-	19	66	s
Herne Bay	9.2	-	20	68	c	Tenby	1.3	0.03	18	64	b
Hurnstanton	10.0	-	17	63	s	Torquay	11.0	-	19	66	s
Isle-of-man	7.4	0.24	16	61	s	Weymouth	10.6	-	19	66	s

ABROAD

Ajaccio	25	77	s	Corfu	25	77	f	Madrid	25	77	t
Akrotiri	27	81	s	C'phagn	18	64	f	Majorca	28	82	f
Alex'dria	29	84	s	Dublin	16	61	c	Malaga	27	81	f
Algiers	28	82	f	Dubrovnik	23	73	s	Malta	27	81	s
Amst'dm	20	68	s	Faro	28	82	s	Melb'rne	13	55	c
Athens	27	81	s	Florence	23	73	s	Mexico C	21	70	s
B Aires	24	75	s	Frankfurt	21	70	s	Miami	31	88	s
Bahrain	34	93	s	Funchal	23	73	f	Milan	24	75	s
Bangkok	32	90	t	Geneva	19	66	s	Montreal	17	63	s
Barbados	29	84	t	Gibraltar	25	77	c	Moscow	14	57	c
Barcelona	26	77	s	Helsinki	15	59	c	Munich	19	66	s
Beirut	28	82	f	Hong K	28	82	c	N Delhi	31	88	f
Belgrade	18	64	f	Innsbruck	20	68	s	N York	27	81	s
Berlin	22	72	s	Istanbul	20	68	f	Nairobi	25	77	f
Bermuda	27	81	t	Jeddah	38	97	s	Naples	26	77	s
Biarritz	27	81	s	Jo'burg	20	68	f	Nice	25	77	s
Borde'x	26	79	s	Karachi	X			Oslo	16	61	f
Brussels	22	72	s	L Angels	24	75	s	Paris	21	70	s
Budapst	21	70	s	L Palmas	28	82	s	Peking	20	68	s
Cairo	30	86	s	Le Touet	21	70	s	Perth	21	70	f
Cape Tn	20	68	s	Lisbon	29	84	s	Prague	18	64	s
Ch'church	12	54		Locarno	20	68	s	Reykjavik	7	45	s
Chicago	29	84	s	Luxembg	18	64	s	Rhodes	28	82	s
Cologne	22	72	s	Luxor	36	97	s	Rio de J	21	70	f
Riyadh	39	102	s								
Rome	25	77	s								
S Fr'isco	21	70	s								
S Paulo	20	68	f								
Salzburg	19	66	s								
Santiago	X										
Seoul	21	70	f								
Sing'por	31	88	c								
St'kholm	18	64	f								
Strasb'rg	21	70	s								
Sydney	18	64	s								
Tangier	28	82	f								
Tel Aviv	29	84	s								
Tenerife	26	79	s								
Tokyo	17	63	s								
Toronto	21	70	s								
Tunis	28	82	s								
Valencia	25	77	f								
Vanc'ver	17	63	f								
Venice	21	70	s								
Vienna	19	66	s								
Warsaw	19	66	s								
Wash'ton	X										
Wel'ngton	X										
Zurich	19	66	s								

Temperatures at midday local time on Tuesday X = not available

NOON TODAY



Changes to chart below from noon: high A will drift southeast, to the North Sea
Low E will fill in situ; low G will become indistinct as it moves northeast

HIGH TIDES

TODAY	AM	HT	PM	HT	TODAY	AM	HT	PM	HT
London Bridge	03.30	7.7	15.45	7.7	Leith	04.00	6.2	16.30	6.1
Aberdeen	02.42	4.8	15.18	4.6	Liverpool	00.38	10.4	13.03	10.1
Avonmouth	09.03	14.3	21.24	14.6	Lowestoft	10.56	3.9	23.39	3.6
Belfast	00.20	3.8	12.50	3.6	Margate	01.38	5.0	13.43	5.1
Cardiff	08.49	13.2	21.10	13.5	Milford Haven	07.57	7.6	20.19	7.8
Devonport	07.30	5.8	19.50	6.0	Newquay	06.48	7.6	19.10	7.7
Dover	00.23	7.1	12.45	7.2	Oban	07.27	4.2	19.51	4.5
Dublin (N Wall)	00.52	4.6	13.26	4.4	Penzance	06.18	5.9	18.40	6.1
Fishguard	07.01	5.6	19.21	5.8	Portland	08.56	2.3	21.11	2.5
Greenock	02.10	3.8	14.35	3.6	Portsmouth	00.36	5.0	13.05	5.0
Harwich	01.27	4.4	13.42	4.4	Shoreham	00.35	6.7	13.04	6.7
Holyhead	-	-	12.03	6.0	Southampton	00.06	5.0	12.34	5.0
Hull (Albert D)	07.48	9.5	20.21	9.2	Swansea	08.07	10.6	20.27	10.8
Ilfracombe	07.45	10.0	20.06	10.2	Tees	05.09	8.0	17.42	8.8
King's Lynn	07.56	7.7	20.34	7.3	Walton-on-N	01.16	4.6	13.30	4.6

All times BST Heights in metres

HIGHEST & LOWEST

Yesterday: Highest day temp: Jersey, Channel Islands, 24C (75F); lowest day max: Lerwick, Shetland Islands, 9C (48F); highest rainfall: Morecambe, Lancashire, 0.43in; highest sunshine: Torquay, Devon 11.0hr

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THE TIMES 2

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Bronwen Maddox counts the cost of devolution
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Focus on a country at the crossroads
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SPORT
Arrows decision leaves Hill with few options
PAGES 46-52

TELEVISION AND RADIO
PAGES 50, 51

BUSINESS EDITOR Patience Wheatcroft

THURSDAY SEPTEMBER 18 1997

Stores urge caution as retail sales figures show strong growth

Spending in high street fuels rate fear

BY ALASDAIR MURRAY AND PHILIP BASSETT

THE City is braced for *further interest rate rises* after new data showed unemployment at a 17-year low and the high street spending boom continuing unabated.

Unemployment fell to 1,496,500, or 5.3 per cent of the workforce, in August — the lowest figure since 1980.

Retail sales rose 0.4 per cent in August, the same rate as in July, although the annual rate slipped from 6.7 per cent to a still robust 5.6 per cent. The Office for National Statistics estimated that windfall spending *added an extra £100 million* to sales during the month.

Annual growth in average earnings also rose, from 4.25 per cent to 4.5 per cent, the maximum level that the Bank of England believes is compatible with stable inflation.

Economists said the stronger than expected data made it almost certain that the Bank would raise rates again before the end of the year, most probably in November.

This view received further backing from the minutes of *the August monetary policy committee meeting*, which were also published yesterday. The minutes show the committee believes inflation risks are "skewed to the upside".

Mark Wall, UK economist at Deutsche Morgan Grenfell, said: "Today's data dashed hopes of a rapid slowdown in the economy. As employment *rises, consumer spending will* be underpinned and should trigger another rise in rates before the end of the year."

Michael Dicks, UK economist at Lehman Brothers, said there was a danger that the Bank was now running "behind the curve" of necessary rate rises. "We're back to the traditional pattern in the UK of too little too late," he said.

The threat of new base rate rises unsettled the gilts market and sent the pound higher on the foreign exchanges. The pound climbed a pfennig and a half against the mark to close at DM2.8327, while sterling's trade-weighted index rose 0.4 to close at 99.5.

But the stock market took the data in its stride, taking its cue from another strong performance in New York. The FTSE 100 index rose for the third day, closing up 36.7 points at 5,013.1. The market has now risen 3.3 per cent this week to completely erase the losses recorded last week.

The 55,000 fall in unemployment was the eighteenth successive drop. Claimant unemployment is now down by almost 1.5 million since its peak in December 1992.

The Government welcomed the fall but said the latest figures were highly seasonal. It emphasised that too much *weight should not be placed* on the edging-up of the figures for average earnings from 4.25 to 4.5 per cent.

Economists said the rise in earnings was largely confined to the construction industry while underlying earnings figures for manufacturing, production and service industries all remained stable in July. Simon Briscoe, director of economic research at Nikko Europe, also pointed to data showing a slowdown in employment growth from 97,000 *in the first quarter of the year* to 64,000 in the second.

Most of the monthly growth in retail sales came from the food sector which increased by 1.3 per cent over July. The quarterly figure for household goods, which attracted much of the windfall spending, was a record 8.2 per cent.

But economists said there was *still little evidence of* inflationary pressures on the high street, despite the continuing consumer boom. Non-seasonal food prices fell sharply in August while overall high street inflation — as measured by the retail sales deflator — is running at an annual rate of just 0.6 per cent.

The City is expecting a *marked slowdown in retail* sales this month, partly because of the closure of shops for the funeral of Diana, Princess of Wales. But most economists expect growth to resume in October.

Commentary, page 29

THE Government yesterday abandoned announcing the trend in unemployment, a figure widely used in the City and elsewhere as the best guideline to future changes in the number of people without work (Philip Bassett writes).

***The move increases pressure* for a new measure of unemployment. Ministers said they expected to receive soon the findings of a Whitehall review of jobless figures.**

Officials said the introduction of the Jobseeker's Allowance, the previous Government's replacement for traditional unemployment benefit, had had so much effect on unemployment figures that they were considering starting a post-JSA series.

When JSA was introduced, *the Office for National Statistics* suspended publication of its trend figure. It said it would not try to estimate a trend without checking it against the Labour Force Survey.

Commentary, page 29



Windfalls are believed to have added £100 million to high street spending in August

Boom now over, says Next

BY SARAH CUNNINGHAM, RETAIL CORRESPONDENT

NEXT rattled market nerves yesterday by reporting a slowdown in growth in the last six weeks and indicating that the windfall-driven boom in clothing retailing is at an end.

The shares plunged 41p in early trade on figures showing like-for-like sales growth of just 2 per cent, against 12 to 13 per cent in the previous six months. The price recovered to close at 735½p, up 7p, after the company clarified that half-day shop closures for the funeral of Diana, Princess of Wales, a warm August and the changed timing of summer sales had produced an unusual few weeks. Underlying like-for-like growth was indicated as closer to 6 or 7 per cent.

Nonetheless, Lord Woolfson of Sunningdale, chairman, said that the market had become more difficult. He said: "There is no doubt that there was a retail boom that couldn't last, and a lot of the trade is saying that it is quiet."

Pre-tax profit in the six months to July was £71.2 million (£56 million). An interim dividend of 6p (5p), due January 2, is payable from earnings of 13.9p (10.9p).

Tempus, page 30

Soaring B&Q sales help Kingfisher leap 36%

BY SARAH CUNNINGHAM

SURGING sales at B&Q, Kingfisher's DIY chain, helped to lift the retail group's interim earnings by a forecast-beating 36 per cent.

Sir Geoffrey Mulcahy, chief executive, said that growth accelerated in most retail markets in which Kingfisher operates. However, he gave warning that these markets remain highly competitive. "Like all other retailers, we are finding that consumers are increasingly discerning," he said.

Sir Geoffrey said that benefits to retailers from building society *windfalls had* been overstated. He expects most windfall spending to go on cars and holidays.

All subsidiaries, including Superdrug and Woolworths, produced better sales. Darty, the French electrical retailer, saw improved sales, although the strong pound pushed down profits. B&Q was the strongest performer, with like-for-like sales up 12 per cent, extending its leading share of the DIY market. Net margins also improved to give sharply higher operating profits of £72.2 million, up 53.6 per cent. Strong sales at Comet, the electrical retailer, which has now absorbed the Norweb chain, led to a profit of £2.6 million, up from a loss of £3 million a year ago.

Sir Geoffrey said that any deal to buy the whole of But, the French retailer, of which Kingfisher owns 26 per cent, would be well within the group's cash resources and would not need a rights issue.

Pre-tax profit, excluding exceptionals, was £150.1 million in the half year to August 2, up from £110.7 million a year ago. An interim dividend of 6.5p (5p) is due on November 21.

BUSINESS TODAY

STOCK MARKET INDICES

FTSE 100	5013.1	(+36.7)
Yield	3.30%	
FTSE All share	2356.67	(+17.48)
Nikkei	17683.27	(-291.23)
New York:		
Dow Jones	7903.27	(+7.35)*
S&P Composite	946.26	(+0.62)*

US RATE

Federal Funds	5 1/16%*	(5 1/16%)
Long Bond	99 27/32*	(99 31/32)
Yield	6.39%*	(6.40%)

LONDON MONEY

3-mth Interbank	7 1/16%	(7 1/16%)
Life long gilt future (Dec)	117 22	(117 10)

STERLING

New York:		
$	1.5983*	(1.5944)
London:		
$	1.6022	(1.5945)
DM	2.8336	(2.8192)
FFr	9.5191	(9.4712)
SFr	2.3264	(2.3099)
Yen	192.47	(192.58)
£ index	99.5	(98.1)

$ DOLLAR

London:		
DM	1.7715*	(1.7690)
FFr	5.9530*	(5.9420)
SFr	1.4588*	(1.4514)
Yen	120.88*	(121.20)
$ index	105.1	(105.5)

Tokyo close Yen 120.57

NORTH SEA OIL

Brent 15-day (Nov) $18.60 ($18.85)

GOLD

London close $320.65 ($321.05)

* denotes midday trading price

Mis-selling price

Britannic Assurance disclosed that it has set aside £150 million to compensate investors who received bad advice over the purchase of their personal pensions plans. Page 28

Tobacco delay

The ban on tobacco advertising probably will not come into effect for another three years because of the long lead times required to draft the legislation, the chief executive of Gallaher, maker of Silk Cut cigarettes said Page 32

Alcopops lose fizz at Bass

BASS, whose acquisitive intentions continue to excite the City rumour machine, provided further evidence yesterday that the alcopops phenomenon is on the wane (Dominic Walsh writes).

In a trading update on the *first 11 months* of the year, the brewing and leisure group said that Hooper's Hooch, the market leader, had suffered an 11 per cent drop in volumes in the UK. Although overseas sales saw significant growth, the UK still accounts for the bulk of sales.

Yesterday's news came as speculation of a possible bid for Rank, owner of Butlin's and the Hard Rock Cafe, gathered pace. Sources indicated that Sir Ian Prosser, chairman of Bass, had made an approach with a view to putting the two companies together in an agreed merger. Their combined value would exceed £10 billion.

Commentary, page 29

IMF dismisses need for German rate rise

BY JANET BUSH AND ALASDAIR MURRAY

THE International Monetary Fund yesterday played down fears that interest rates in Germany and America are set to rise steeply.

Michael Mussa, IMF Director of Research, said that there was no plausible case either for an early rise in German interest rates or for anything *more than a moderate tightening* of monetary policy later.

The IMF also described American inflation as "remarkably low" despite several *years of strong economic* growth and large falls in unemployment and said that interest rates would only need to rise by a quarter to half per *cent over the next six months.*

But Ernst Welteke, a Bundesbank council member, again raised fears in the markets that the German central bank could make a swift move on interest rates. Herr Welteke said inflation indicators were all going "in the wrong direction" and the Bundesbank would need to look "very carefully" at the next set of economic data.



Waigel: contradictory

His comments came as the increasingly fractious German Government struggled for a common front on EMU policy. Klaus Kinkel, foreign minister, appeared yesterday to indicate that countries might not have to meet the 3.0 per cent deficit target exactly to qualify for EMU. But Theo Waigel, finance minister, insisted later that Germany would "stick to the criteria".

Eddie George, meanwhile, called for Britain to hold off joining EMU until it is satisfied that "real convergence" can be achieved with a "large number of countries".

But the Governor of the Bank of England told the *Il Sole 24 Ore* newspaper in Milan that if EMU started with the "nucleus of the mark area we would see no problems".

IMF dismay, page 28

Flotation for First National

THE wave of demutualisation that has spread through British building societies has crossed the Irish sea. First National, the Republic's largest society, is to become a bank, distributing free shares to some 220,000 members (Anne Ashworth writes).

The size of the average windfall has yet to be revealed by the society but has been estimated by analysts at around £1,800. First National, which was established in 1861, should float within 18 to 24 months and will be listed on both the Irish and London stock exchanges.

The society has expanded into the UK through acquisitions but the vast majority of the 90,000 savers and borrowers with its UK businesses will not benefit, as they are not members of the society. First National's UK arm offers only deposit accounts, without membership rights.

BG confirms £1.3bn share buyback

BY CHRISTINE BUCKLEY
INDUSTRIAL CORRESPONDENT

BG, the demerged pipeline and exploration division of British Gas, yesterday confirmed it is to give £1.3 billion to investors in a buyback of its shares.

The move comes as the company is embroiled *in a dispute* with the regulator over implementing price curbs, set by the Monopolies and Mergers Commission, which it had originally said would cripple the business. The buyback also follows a £514 million bill for the windfall tax. But BG is also to cut its dividend after giving warning earlier this year that the payment would have to be reduced to take account of its exposure to take-or-pay contracts and for the price curbs backed by the MMC. The full-year dividend will fall to 8p (14.5p).

BG said it had been forced to mount a buyback and share *consolidation to* reduce the cost of servicing its equity after the MMC recommendation on price curbs for Transco, the pipelines network. The company faces a 13 per cent reduction in the charges it can make to shippers to use the network.

The company is at loggerheads with the regulator over plans to place a *revenue cap on Transco in the licence* ammendments for the MMC ruling. While David Varney, chief executive, refused to outline what BG could do, it is thought he could try for a judicial *review of the decision or implement* cost savings on top of those announced, which include 2,500 job losses.

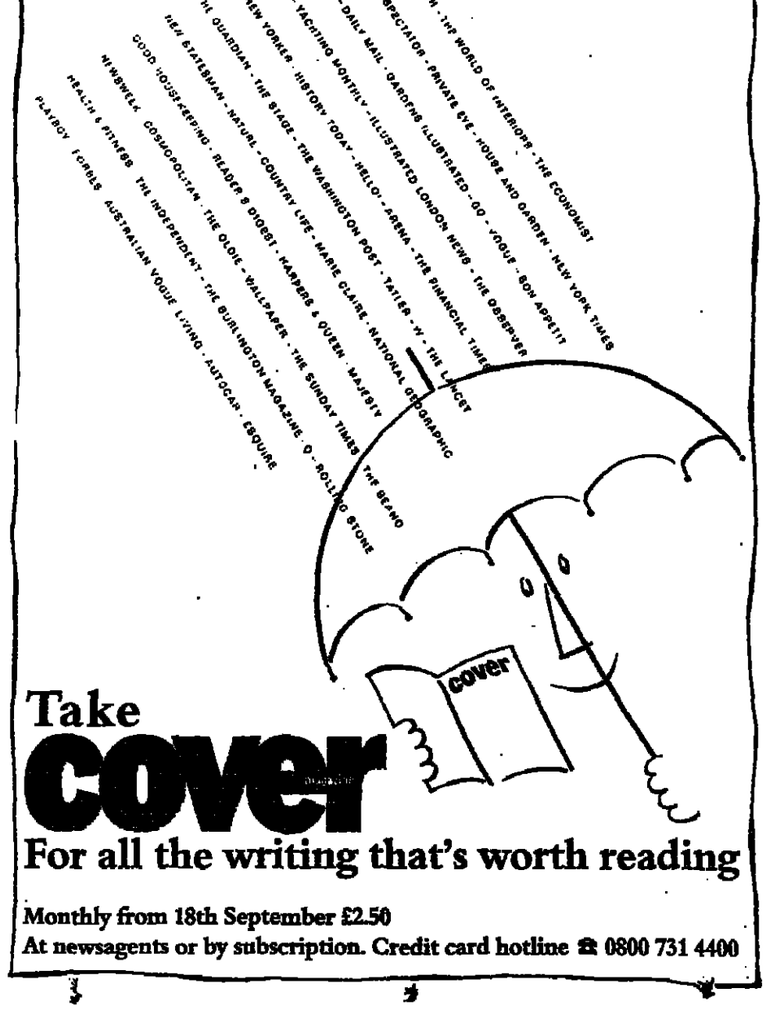
BG said it would borrow the cash to buy back its shares. The buyback was announced as BG unveiled its first interim figures after the demerger in February. On a modified historical cost basis, operating profits climbed to *£820 million from £580 million*, largely because of cost savings and lower depreciation charges.

Pre-tax profits on continuing operations were £759 million compared with £434 million, while post-tax profits — excluding the windfall tax — were £486 million.

The interim dividend was set at 4p, down 2p. Tempus, page 30

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Britannic makes £150m mis-sold pension provision

BY MARIANNE CURPHEY, INSURANCE CORRESPONDENT

BRITANNIC ASSURANCE yesterday disclosed that it had set aside £150 million to compensate investors who were mis-sold personal pensions.

It has also seconded 174 full-time staff to work on an investigation into the 13,500 priority cases it has identified.

Brian Shaw, chief executive, said that he was awaiting approval from the Personal Investment Authority (PIA) for a scheme to reinstate victims into occupational schemes and ensure they had not missed out on benefits. He added: "Putting together compensation which mirrors the benefits they would have received had they joined an employer's scheme will take longer."

Harold Cottam, chairman of Britannic, said that he hoped to clear the first set of cases in time for the deadline laid down by the PIA at the end of this year.

The group's shares rose 93p to 939p after it announced a generous new dividend policy and a 21 per cent boost to operating profit. The 11 per cent rise made Britannic the best performing share among FTSE 250 stocks yesterday and means the group is now capitalised at £1.8 billion.

Mr Cottam said he was keen to merge with a rival to fill the vacuum left as traditional home services providers such as Prudential chased more upmarket customers.

He said: "It would need to be a merger that adds value rather than just deliver market dominance." Analysts said the most suitable merger candidate would be United Assurance.

The increased dividend and the profits boost result from the injection of £1 billion of surplus assets released from its life fund in February.

The surplus, known as inherited estate or orphan assets, will fund a 20 per cent annual dividend growth over the next few years, the company forecasts. The surplus built up because previous shareholders had not always taken out the returns they were due.

Britannic, which yesterday unveiled results for the half-year to June 30, doubled its interim dividend to 10p a share and forecast the full-year payout would be 20 per cent higher at 33.6p per share.

Operating profit before tax was up 21 per cent to £80 million (£25.8 million).

Operating earnings per share were up 230 per cent to 30.38p (9.2p). Total shareholders' funds are £1.2 billion (December 1996: £132 million).

Tempus, page 30

Trinity profits up 34% at half time

BY RAYMOND SNODDY, MEDIA EDITOR

TRINITY INTERNATIONAL, publisher of the *Liverpool Post* and the *Belfast Telegraph* newspapers, provided further evidence of the renaissance in the regional press sector yesterday with a 34 per cent rise in pre-tax profits, to £32 million, in the half year to June.

Philip Graf, chief executive, attributed the improvement to strong advertising growth, lower newsprint costs and continuing savings from group restructurings.

On future prospects, he said: "I remain positive about the opportunities within the regional media."

Turnover fell 3 per cent, from £165.3 million to £159 million, because of the sale of Trinity's Canadian division. Operating profit rose 28 per cent to £36.9 million.

Earnings per share increased 41.2 per cent to 16.1p. The interim dividend rises 11 per cent to 4p.

Trinity said it was continuing to benefit from advertising revenues strengthed by consumer confidence. Newsprint prices were stable, it added. Ciculation initiatives were also expected to help progress.

PETER TRIEVNOR



Model Marina Midali in a spring/summer 1998 outfit

Frank Usher gives warning on first-half profits

BY JENNIFER DAVEY

FRANK USHER has announced a rise in pre-tax profits from £2.02 million to £2.15 million in the year to May 31. Sales rose slightly from £21.6 million to £21.9 million.

The clothes designer gave warning that it is unlikely to be able to maintain the same level of first-half profits in the current year. It predicts that it will be hard to maintain margins and volume in the short term.

The spring/summer 1998 collections have just started showing, however, and early indications are encouraging.

The company said it was pleased with its results. Sales showed rises in the UK and significant growth in newer export markets in France, Spain, and Italy, despite decreased sales in Germany because of general economic conditions.

Re-orders and high product demand meant that at the year end group warehousing capacity was doubled and turnaround increased.

Exports, which accounted for 53 per cent of sales in 1996, were down to 50 per cent this year, which is attributed to the strong pound.

Earnings per share rose from 18.1p to 19.7p, because of the higher profit and a higher than normal tax charge in the previous year.

There is a final dividend of 7p, making an unchanged total for the year of 11.0p. The shares fell from 168p to 161½p.

BUSINESS ROUNDUP

France and Germany mount Liffe challenge

FRANCE and Germany have joined forces to create Europe's largest derivatives exchange. SBF-Bourse de Paris, the French stock market body, announced plans to buy the Matif futures and options exchange. It has signed a letter of intent to link with Deutsche Boerse, the German stock exchange body, which owns the DTB electronic futures exchange. The move points to further consolidation among European derivatives exchanges in the run-up to the launch of the single European currency. It poses a fresh challenge to the London International Financial Futures Exchange. Liffe said the Franco-German move was a response to its own competitive strength. A spokesman said: "This is not really a surprise. The advent of EMU will mean fewer exchanges. This is a challenge, but it is also a response, in a way, to our successes."

Meanwhile, CEENET, set up by the Corporation of London in 1994 to promote London as a financial centre, is today expected to agree a merger with British Invisibles, the promotional body. Henrietta Royle, chief executive of CEENET, said it would lead to a "more co-ordinated" approach to selling London abroad. City Diary, page 31

Electricity complaints

LONDON ELECTRICITY is being scrutinised by its regulator, Offer, after a 55 per cent rise in customer complaints to Offer. The regional electricity company has recruited 50 more staff to deal with calls, and Offer is working with it. A spokeswoman said: "We are working out the most appropriate way to handle their complaints. Part of the problem has been customers not feeling satisfied with the way their complaints have been dealt with." Complaints rose to 561 in the year to March 31, from 360. Northern Electric complaints rose 27 per cent, to 460. In all, complaints about electricity companies fell 10 per cent.

Gas switch for 500,000

A QUARTER of gas customers who can shop around for their supply have left British Gas, the regulator said yesterday. The number of switches has climbed to 500,000, with customers changing supplier at a rate of 5,000 a week. Clare Spottiswoode, the gas regulator, said the figure was an important milestone. She said: "As we expected, there was a surge of interest when competition was extended to Avon, Dorset, Kent and Sussex in February and March this year." Competition, which started in the South West, will move to Scotland and the North East on November 1.

EU fears over ferry deal

THE European Commission still has serious doubts about a planned joint venture between P&O and Stena Line, the ferry companies, EU sources said on Wednesday. They said the EU executive was not expected to rule on the case before the end of November. One source said: "A final decision is not expected before the end of November at the earliest." The Commission will soon send a so-called statement of objections to the companies, detailing its problems with the proposed deal, the sources said. P&O and Stena would have six weeks to reply to the Commission's objections.

Pound hits Bowthorpe

SHARES in Bowthorpe, the electronic components manufacturer, rose 17½p to 366½p yesterday, in spite of the company reporting falls in both profits and sales. The rise in share price was seen as a sign of confidence in the restructuring plan designed by Nick Brookes, the company's recently appointed chief executive. Bowthorpe blamed the strength of sterling for the 5 per cent fall in half-year pre-tax profits, from £42.5 million to £40.2 million, and the 4 per cent fall in sales, from £270 million to £260 million. An interim dividend of 3.43p, up from 3.21p, is to be paid on December 8.

One-stop Woolwich

THE Woolwich has pitched into the lucrative field of conveyancing by opening its first estate agency one-stop shop. The bank is offering homebuyers the services of estate agent, mortgage lender and solicitor. Other estate agents have already piloted the scheme. These include Hambro Countrywide, which hopes to benefit from the extra fees such services will generate. Woolwich's first shop is based in High Wycombe and will open later this year. Woolwich is taking advantage of the boom in the property market and the planned rationalisation of Lloyds TSB's Black Horse estate agencies.

New Asda phonecard to undercut BT by up to 75%

BY SARAH CUNNINGHAM

ASDA, the supermarkets group, is to launch a pre-paid phonecard that will compete directly with British Telecom's own cards and charge up to 75 per cent less for calls.

Allan Leighton, chief executive of Asda said his aim was to eliminate exaggerated profits in the UK's rapidly expanding phonecard market. He added: "Anyone who's been shocked by their phone bill knows how over-priced the UK phone market is."

A three-minute local evening call will cost 21p with the Asda card, compared with 27p with a BT phonecard and 60p with a BT chargecard. A five-minute weekend call to the US will cost £1 with the Asda card, £3.60 with the BT phonecard, and £4 with its chargecard.



Leighton: market overpriced

The market is already worth an annual £110 million, with a number of phonecard brands offering similar discounts to those provided by Asda.

The new card, which comes in £1, £3, £5 and £10 versions, will go on trial at Asda's store in Pudsey, West Yorkshire, from early next month and is expected to be on sale nationwide by the end of the year. It may be used with any touch-tone phone to make calls within the UK and to more than 230 countries.

The card differs from the BT version, which the customer inserts into a slot in the phone. Instead, each Asda card comes with PIN number that is keyed in before dialling.

BT said: "The customer simply puts our card into the phone, whereas with the Asda version he or she has to type extra digits before the call begins. Not everyone wants to do that.

"But we recognise that it is a competitive market and this phonecard will represent good value for some customers."

American acquisition for CRH

BY ADAM JONES

CRH, the Irish building materials group, has continued its US expansion with the purchase of CPM Development Corporation, based in Washington, for $94 million (£59.1 million) in cash.

CPM's activities include production of asphalt, aggregates and concrete for tasks such as roadbuilding and residential development.

The company made a pre-tax profit of $14.6 million last year on sales of $131 million. Existing management will be retained and $6 million of the purchase price will be conditional on performance. CRH is paying book value for the company.

CRH's US materials division will now have sales of about $1 billion.

NewRo Bill will kill off old Acts

BY GAVIN LUMSDEN

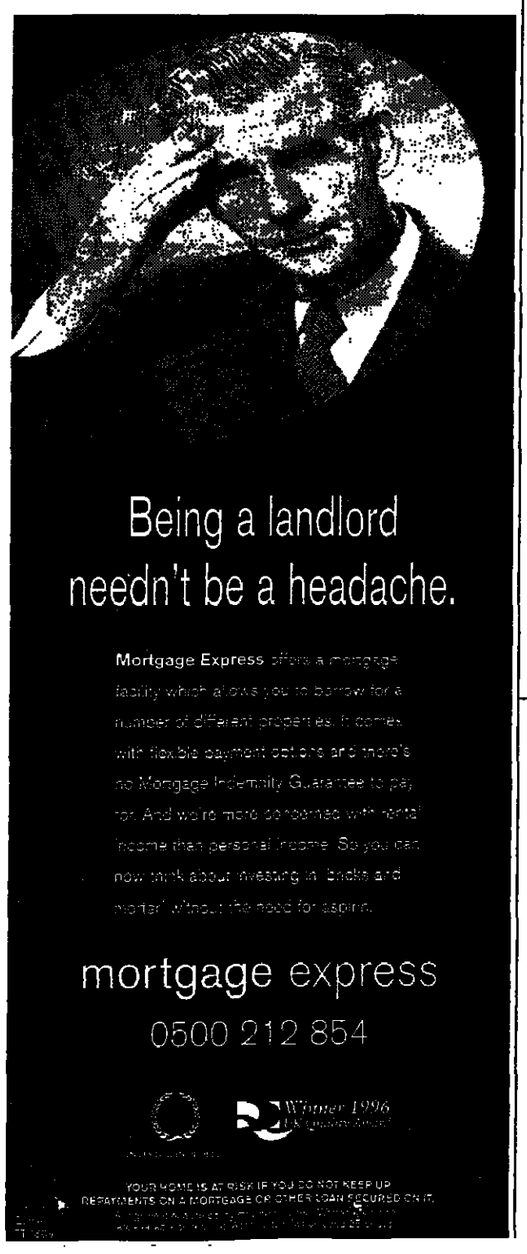
NEWRO, the unitary City regulator due to be introduced next year, is to be empowered by a single reform Bill that will sweep away the vast array of financial services legislation that has accumulated over the years, Helen Liddell, Economic Secretary to the Treasury, announced yesterday.

The Treasury has decided against amending existing financial services legislation. Instead, laws such as the Financial Services Act, the Banking Act, the Building Societies Act and the Policyholders Protection Act will, where possible, be repealed and replaced with a single Act. A draft Bill will be published for consultation next summer.

Mrs Liddell refused to detail the Bill's contents, but said: "We have ... begun work in earnest on the framework of controls and accountabilities that will deliver our aim of a regulator that is clearly accountable to the public and the Government."

As a company limited by guarantee, NewRo would have the same legal status and form as the Securities and Investments Board (SIB), the current lead regulator of financial services, she said. However, unlike SIB, NewRo may be given statutory objectives similar to those for utility regulators.

Mrs Liddell strongly suggested that the Treasury would include outsiders to the industry on the regulator's board to see that it functioned as a public guardian.



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Fund's $17bn rescue shows few signs of reviving confidence in battered economy

IMF dismay over slow pace of Thai reforms

BY JANET BUSH AND ALASDAIR MURRAY

THE International Monetary Fund admitted yesterday it is disappointed that its $17 billion (£10.5 billion) Thai rescue package has not restored more confidence in the battered economy.

Michael Mussa, IMF director of research, said: "Things have gone a little less well than we had hoped."

Rumours that the IMF might withhold future payments to Thailand because of the slow pace of reform in the country again spooked markets though South-East Asia. The Thai baht fell to 37.22 against the dollar, compared with 36.55 on Tuesday. The Malaysian ringitt slipped from 2.9900 to 3.015, while the Philippine peso hit a record low of 33.25 to the dollar. The Singaporean dollar and the Indonesian rupiah also suffered, although falls were less marked. The continuing currency problems weighed heavily on stock markets in the region, with all the main exchanges registering declines.

The political uncertainty surrounding the Thai rescue package seems certain to prompt further currency sell-offs over the coming week. Thailand has two vital parliamentary votes next week, including a no-confidence motion against the Government that could threaten the austerity budget passing through parliament.

The first official IMF review of Thailand's compliance with the conditions is scheduled for September 30. Asean finance ministers meet in Bangkok today, although economists believe there is little likelihood of them solving their current problems through currency co-operation.



Asian children feeding off scraps

India key to Asian boom

SOUTH ASIA, led by India, has the potential to be the world's fastest-growing exporter over the next 25 years but must undertake far-reaching economic reforms to take full advantage, according to a report by the World Bank (Janet Bush writes).

The Bank said that sustained progress in reducing poverty in South Asia depended critically on faster growth, "which has been shown to be strongly and positively influenced by integration with the world economy".

The Bank issued an urgent call for further liberalisation of trade barriers, still the highest in the world. Further progress in bringing down tariffs, coupled with privatisation, efforts to contain budget deficits and greater discipline in government, would boost exports substantially.

The report added that India's exports could grow by almost 12 per cent a year in the next decade, potentially the highest rate in the world.

TOURIST RATES

	Bank Buys	Bank Sells
Australia $	2.34	2.16
Austria Sch	20.96	19.30
Belgium Fr	61.73	56.77
Canada $	2.350	2.162
Cyprus CypE	0.882	0.810
Denmark Kr	11.38	10.49
Finland Mkk	9.05	8.30
France Fr	10.0	9.22
Germany Dm	2.99	2.57
Greece Dr	474	435
Hong Kong $	13.25	12.05
Iceland	128	108
Ireland Pt	1.12	1.03
Israel Shk	5.92	5.27
Italy Lira	2941	2704
Japan Yen	207.63	190.10
Malta	0.683	0.604
Netherlds Gld	3.384	3.089
New Zealand $	2.67	2.43
Norway Kr	12.13	11.19
Portugal Esc	300.53	278.50
S Africa Rd	8.22	7.26
Spain Pta	250.79	232.00
Sweden Kr	13.01	11.91
Switzerland Fr	2.48	2.26
Turkey Lira	283121	263243
USA $	1.709	1.566

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Time to maintain digital restraint

COMMENTARY
by our City Editor

This month, the members of the Bank of England's monetary policy committee practised admirable self-restraint. They sat on their hands and allowed interest rates to remain untouched. But yesterday they must have felt a tickle of itchy fingers as a series of buoyant statistics were unveiled.

The figures painted a picture of a country where unemployment is falling, earnings are rising and consumers are confident enough to be out shopping. The question is whether this is a healthy and sustainable state of affairs or whether it is the sign of an economy about to rush out of control.

The fear is that the MPC will interpret the statistics as the latter and may already be preparing to let their digits spring back into action and push up interest rates next month. The minutes of their August meeting, released yesterday, give weight to such a view, betraying an air of unanimous hawkishness around the table. But the MPC should be restrained a little longer. Unlike City analysts, who must produce instant reaction to the statistics, the MPC has weeks to ponder the facts behind the figures and closer investigation should convince the members that their continued inaction is desirable.

The retailers are already delving deep into their vocabularies to explain why the loud ringing of their tills should not be interpreted as a boom. If there is a hint of talking their own book in this, their shareholders would expect nothing less. Kingfisher's Sir Geoffrey Mulcahy was faced with the task yesterday of explaining why his soaring sales were not symptomatic of a consumer boom. Not the easiest of tasks. But not every store is enjoying the same level of success, and the Kingfisher figures are the product of a combination of clever retailing and being in the right markets, for both its Comet and B&Q subsidiaries have undoubtedly been reaping the benefits of the windfalls that have recently swollen consumers' spending power.

The full effect of the demutualisation bonuses cannot yet be determined but, despite yesterday's news from Dublin of yet another building society turning into a bank, the happy days for carpetbaggers are drawing to a close. We may have to wait until Christmas to see just what proportion of the gains is to be spent and what will be squirreled away in sensible saving, but the windfall effect does need to be stripped from the retail sales figures before a true pattern of dangerous extravagance could be diagnosed.

A heavy brew of rumours

City rumours feed on themselves until they assume gargantuan proportions. The latest one to be showing signs of over-indulgence is the story that Bass is about to join forces with Rank.

The thinking behind this is that the ambitious Sir Ian Prosser, prohibited from carrying out his Carlsberg coup by the mean Margaret Beckett, is now anxious to see corporate action elsewhere. And Rank, so the gossip goes, may be amenable to an approach as its share price languishes and the analysts pour scorn on its chief executive.

Those who like a little substance with their rumours can even point out that the two companies have already begun to cooperate, Bass's Marriott hotels having a nascent relationship with Rank's Tom Cobbleigh pub business.

But while there may be bits of Rank that would appeal to Sir Ian, there are elements that most certainly would not. Wet blankets they may be, but those close to the company suggest that Sir Ian is not about to pay over the odds in order to provide Andrew Teare with a comfortable exit route from Rank. Bass has already demonstrated that it can grow its own format pubs, with the very successful All Bar One chain. There is no reason why the company should do what Rank did and pay hugely over the odds to acquire another pub business, Tom Cobbleigh.

If Hard Rock could be extricated from the Rank stable, then Sir Ian would surely be interested, but so would a host of international operators. There is every reason why purchasers might want it, but no reason why Rank should sell. So for Bass, the choice must be to take all of Rank or none — the likelihood is that the answer will be none.

There are, after all, other businesses that must be attracting Sir Ian's attention at the moment. The William Hill betting shop business is an obvious one. The business is up for sale and has attracted several bids, both from abroad and from home grown venture capitalists with plenty of cash. For Bass, with its Coral chain of bookies, William Hill would be an obvious fit. But for one thing: the spectre of Margaret Beckett, the interventionist President of the Board of Trade.

After his abortive Carlsberg venture, Sir Ian would not want another counter-productive tangle with her. But if a deal could first be cooked up with Ladbroke to split the William Hill portfolio, Bass might avoid a monopolies problem and back a winner.

Changing rules for measuring jobs

When in Opposition, Labour derided the unemployment statistics. The more optimistic the figures, the louder the criticism of their authenticity. But things look different from the perspective of Government. Now Labour ministers seem to be losing their enthusiasm for ditching the current measuring system.

Perhaps financial considerations are influencing them. The set of figures that Labour had previously put its faith in, and which are published quarterly, would bring an annual bill of around £8 million if they were produced monthly. There are suggestions that ministers may be tempted to stick with the current basis of measurement, with just a few cosmetic changes.

But the need for change is clear. While the fall of almost 50,000 in yesterday's jobless total was welcome, the inability of the Office for National Statistics to suggest what the monthly trend in unemployment now is caused some concern among those who snatch at statistics as fodder for their computer models.

Ordinary folk might think that divining a trend from monthly figures should not be difficult but statisticians are a different breed. The ONS chaps may be trying to push the Government into taking a decision over how unemployment is to be measured. Will it put its money where its mouth certainly was, and clean up the jobless figures once and for all by sanctioning a new monthly measure? Or will spending pressures prevail against principle?

Ruled out

GREAT news. The Government has lined up a new regulation task force. This one, says Dr David Clark, the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, is to help produce better regulation rather than less regulation. This may indicate a sense of reality, but plenty of red tape still needs to be cut. The team assembled under the leadership of Northern Foods' Chris Haskins should regularly remind itself that in regulation, less is good.

Savoy checks out cities overseas

BY DOMINIC WALSH

THE Savoy Group, which has just completed a £72 million refurbishment project, is pressing ahead with plans to buy up to ten hotels in leading international cities over the next five years.

Ramón Pajares, managing director, said yesterday that he was preparing a strategy document on international expansion that he would present to the board soon. He added: "The brand name has a value which gives us a tremendous opportunity to acquire hotels in the right cities abroad."

He pointed out that expanding the Savoy name would decrease the current ratio of overhead costs, enable the company to develop a proper central reservations system, and allow it to compete with the top international hotel groups. He cited Paris and Barcelona as possible targets.

The news came as Mr Pajares unveiled an 84 per cent jump in pre-tax profits in the first half to £7.7 million as the benefits of the refurbishment began to kick in. The two-year project was completed last week as the finishing touches were put to the £40 million restoration of Claridge's, one of the group's four luxury London hotels. Turnover was 4 per cent better at £45.2 million.

Mr Pajares said that one of the key factors had been a rise in operating margins from 11.5 per cent to 18 per cent, largely because of stringent management controls and the addition of new bedrooms and other services during the refurbishment.

Average occupancy in London rose from 59.8 to 65.6 per cent. However, after taking into account the rooms out of commission for refurbishment, occupancy per available room rose from 81.7 to 85.2 per cent.

Earnings came in at 19.2p (11.3p) per A share, but, as in past years, there is no interim dividend.

Reforms pay off, page 31

Eastern promise attracts Wassall

BY PAUL DURMAN

WASSALL, the manufacturing group that made a £277 million profit from this year's sale of General Cable, its US copper wire business, is looking to spend part of its £300 million cash pile in South East Asia.

The company believes the collapse in the region's stock markets has thrown up interesting acquisition opportunities, particularly in Thailand.

It is looking for a Chinese to become chief executive of Wassall Asia Pacific, its 70 per cent-owned subsidiary, which is separately quoted in Singapore. Chris Miller, chief executive, said Wassall was looking to spend perhaps £20 million in the Far East, but would have no qualms about making a bigger investment if it can find a good deal.

Mr Miller said the company is not close to a deal at the moment. "It's got to be so much more important to do the right deal than a quick deal."

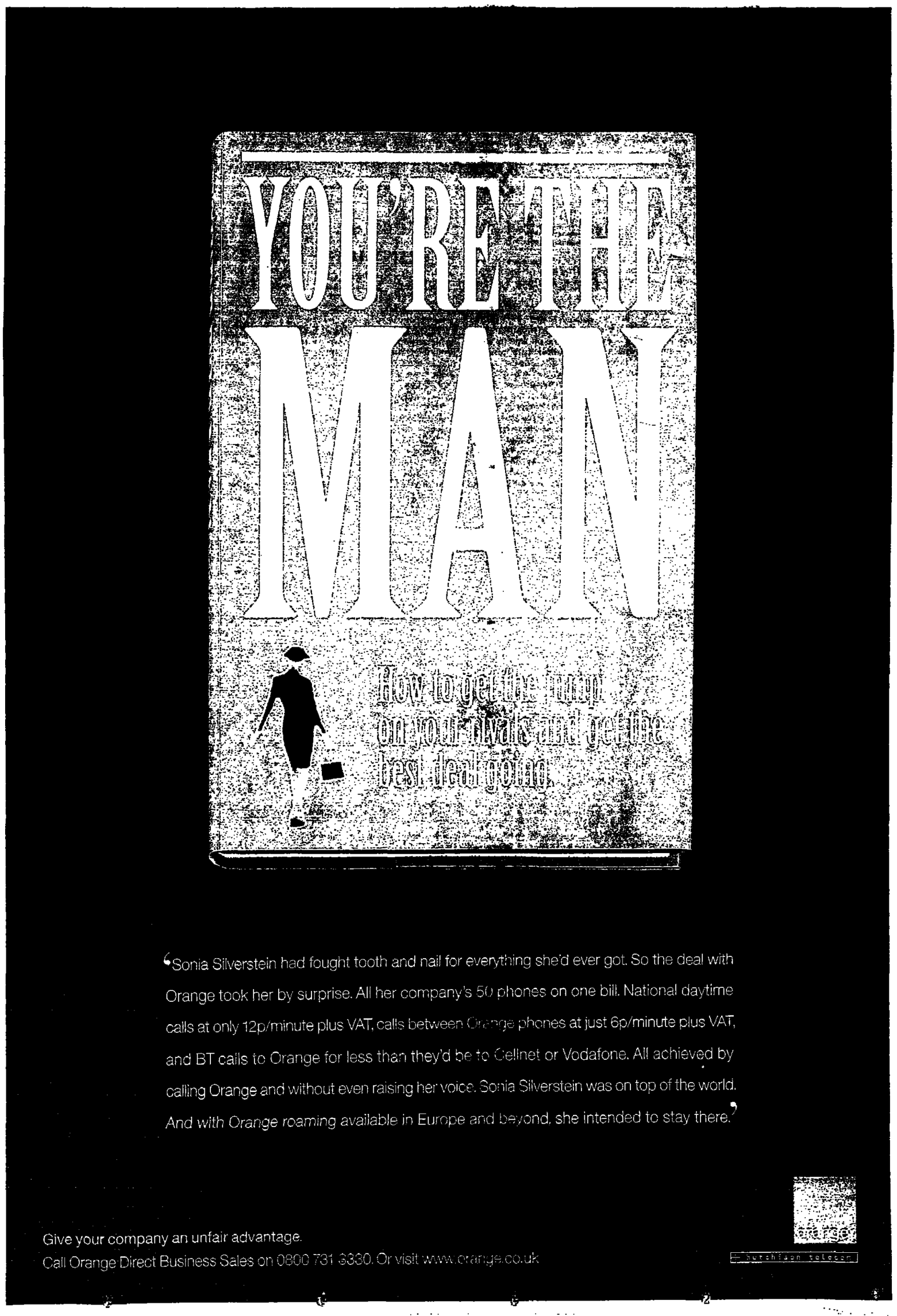
With borrowing facilities, he said Wassall could easily afford to spend £500 million. The group is keen to buy solid manufacturing businesses that have lost their way.

The revival of General Cable since its purchase in 1994 was one factor behind the improvement in Wassall's underlying pre-tax profits, which rose 21 per cent to £29.7 million in the first half. With the £199 million profit from selling the first 80 per cent of General Cable in May, total pre-tax profit in the six months to June 30 was £231.5 million (£22.4 million).

Wassall will pay an interim dividend of 2.3p a share, up 10 per cent, as a foreign income dividend on November 14.

Tempus, page 30

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STOCK MARKET  MICHAEL CLARK

Tobacco companies see early gains stubbed out

EARLY gains enjoyed by the tobacco companies went up in smoke last night after President Clinton outlined his measures to reduce smoking among teenagers.

They included a rise of $1.50 (94p) on a packet of cigarettes over the next ten years. The companies will also face severe penalties if they do not cut teenage smoking rates by up to 60 per cent in ten years.

Mr Clinton's move also threw into doubt the $368.5 billion (£231 billion) settlement thrashed out in June, between 40 state attorney-generals and the tobacco companies, including BAT Industries, Brown & Williamson , Philip Morris and RJR Nabisco. It is feared the companies may be called on to make further concessions. A settlement before the new year now seems unlikely.

Brokers say this will further unsettle the tobacco companies. **BAT** finished 1p easier at 518½p, after touching 523½p, while **Imperial Tobacco** was 8½p off at 375½p. Imps also had to face up to the news that it has lost market share to **Gallaher**, up 4p at 273p after interim figures yesterday.

Paul Hodges, of Schroders, said BAT shares were incredibly cheap whether or not the US litigation goes through.

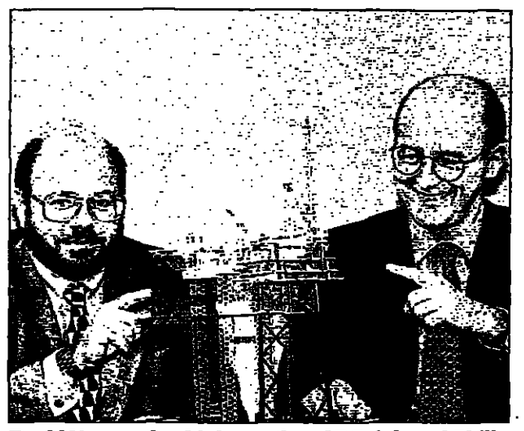
Share prices generally climbed back above the 5,000 level helped by Wall Street's 177-point surge overnight. But they closed well below their best of the day, with the FTSE 100 index ending up 36.7 points at 5,013.1 having touched 5,035.3 earlier in the day.

However, stronger than expected retail sales and wage inflation combined with a sharp drop in unemployment to revive old fears about rising interest rates. A total of 865 million shares were traded.

Rank Group finished 6p lower at 351½p in spite of revived talk of a bid from **Bass**, steady at 844p after a trading update. The latest talk suggests both sides may have had talks. Rank, which was in New York earlier this week talking to fund managers, has a price tag of £2.7 billion.

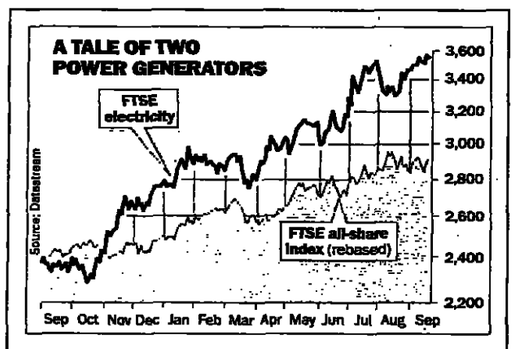
Things are starting to look brighter for Britain's exporters after the recent decline by the pound against the mark. **British Steel**, up 10¼p at 184¼p, is one beneficiary and this has led SBC Warburg, the broker, to upgrade its stance from a "hold" to a "buy".

BG, of which David Varney is chief executive, boiled over after its recent strong run, with the price falling 10p to 258½p on turnover of more than ten million shares. It confirmed plans to buy back £1.3 billion worth of shares, but the rebasing of the payout from 14½p to 8p did not go down well among the income funds.



David Varney, the chief executive of BG, left, and Philip Hampton, finance director, saw the price fall to 258½p

Half-year figures from **Wickes** today should show it is back on the mend. The loss-making do-it-yourself group is expected to reveal a deficit of £1.3 million. There is no comparison for last year because the shares were suspended. But brokers are confident it has turned the corner and is ready to swing back into profits for the full year. The shares rose 6p to 179½p.



NATIONAL POWER fell 20½p at 552p and PowerGen 22p to 755p following publication of a circular from Panmure Gordon, the broker, claiming profit estimates among other brokers were too optimistic.

Philip Hollobone at Panmure said: "There will need to be serious downward revisions to forecasts in the next few months. Nine brokers are 10 per cent too high and five are 15 per cent too high".

The current average consensus is £800 million. Panmure is looking for £745 million. Hollobone says the City is too optimistic about electricity sales and too complacent about competition from gas fired generators. Market share has been falling and overseas earnings are taking too long to come through. National Power will only raise the dividend 8 per cent to 27 per cent compared with 15 per cent at PowerGen.

"The PowerGen share price has been coming down in sympathy and thats wrong. There is even the chance of a share buy back", adds Hollobone.

The directors at **Datrontech**, up 5p at 80p, appear to be confident about the future. Gerard Connolly, a director, has spent £304,000 taking a stake in the company. Through Rydal Trust (1990) he has snapped up 400,000 shares, or 1.03 per cent, at 76p.

Share buying by directors is also responsible for this week's rise in **Matthew Clark**, up another 6p to 230p, for a two-day gain of 11p. Three directors, Hugh Etheridge, Peter Aikens, and Peter Huntley, have bought 13,200 shares between them at 222p.

Note the rapid progress being made by **Pickwick Group** since it floated on Ofex last month at 19p. Last night the group, which has developed "Computter", a golf-putting range in a briefcase, closed at 100p. The company needs to sell 500 of the games a month to break even, but is already selling 2,000 a month. Next month it begins its assault on the golf-mad Japanese.

TRACKER Network fell 100p to 575p after a breakdown in merger talks with **Trafficmaster**, 12p off at 369p. News of a bid approach lifted **Dwyer Estates** 2½p to 69p. Joey Esfandi is apparently considering a bid of 70p a share for the outstanding 76 per cent of the shares he does not already own.

☐ **GILT-EDGED**: Government bonds saw their early gains frittered away after the latest batch of economic figures failed to live up to expectations.

The rise in the August retail sales and average earnings were higher than the market had anticipated and revived dormant fears about further increases in the base rate.

In the futures pit, the December series of the Long Gilt touched a peak of £117²³₃₂ before reverting to close three ticks down on the day at £117²³₃₂ as the total number of contracts completed reached a hefty 156,000.

Conventional issues closed mixed, providing for a further flattening of the yield curve. In longs, Treasury 8 per cent 2015 was unchanged at £113¾, while at the shorter end, Treasury 8 per cent 2000 shed £⅛ at £103¹³₃₂.

☐ **NEW YORK**: Blue chips drifted higher as investors shrugged off an early bout of profit-taking. At midday, the Dow Jones industrial average was up 7.35 points at 7,903.27.

MAJOR INDICES

New York (midday):
Dow Jones 7903.27 (+7.35)
S&P Composite 946.26 (+0.62)

Tokyo:
Nikkei Average 17683.27 (-291.23)

Hong Kong:
Hang Seng Closed

Amsterdam:
EOE Index 898.11 (+16.01)

Sydney:
AO 2679.30 (+27.50)

Frankfurt:
DAX 4010.48 (+111.53)

Singapore:
Straits 1910.24 (+10.36)

Brussels:
General 13840.42 (+43.38)

Paris:
CAC-40 2944.00 (+3.45)

Zurich:
SKA Gen 1157.20 (+7.80)

London:

FT 30	3254.3 (+16.4)
FTSE 100	5013.1 (+36.7)
FTSE 250	4686.8 (+44.0)
FTSE 350	2412.2 (+18.5)
FTSE Eurotrack 100	2609.65 (+48.15)
FTSE All-Share	2356.07 (+17.48)
FTSE Non Financials	2377.11 (+17.61)
FTSE Fixed Interest	127.91 (+0.44)
FTSE Govt Secs	99.13 (+0.06)
Bargains	46243
SEAQ Volume	865.4m
US$	1.6024 (+0.0085)
German Mark	2.6024 (+0.0144)
Exchange Index	99.5 (+0.4)
Bank of England official close (4pm)	
£:ECU	1.4416
£:SDR	1.1695
RPI	158.5 Aug (3.5%) Jan 1987=100
RPIX	157.1 Aug (2.8%) Jan 1987=100

RECENT ISSUES

Antofgsta Cv Uts	397½	...
Bristol & West Prf	115¼	+ ½
Cammell Laird	142½	+ 5
EMI B	115	...
Fleming Asian	80½	+ 1
Flmg Asian Wrts	17¼	...
GR Holdings	52½	...
Galen Holdings	265½	+ 1
Hellcon Pubslg	92½	...
I S Solutions	135½	...
Kingfisher Leisure	177½	...
Reabourne Merlin	107½	...
SBS Group	110½	...
Severn Trent B	37½	...
Stentor Warrants	37½	- 2½
Style Holdings	84½	...
Thorn B	20½	...
Vigien Technology	62	...

RIGHTS ISSUES

John Lusty n/p (8)	1½	...
Langdons Foods n/p (1)	½	...
Misys Uts Cv ULS n/p	82½	- 17½
SEET n/p (30)	1½	...

MAJOR CHANGES

RISES:

Britannic	939p (+93p)
Glynwed	272½p (+19p)
Thistle Hotels	136p (+9p)
United Assurance	481p (+29½p)
Pilkington	156½p (+9p)
Scotia	395p (+22½p)
Courtaulds	325p (+17p)
Close Bros	484p (+23p)
Compass Group	623p (+22½p)
SOCO Int	381p (+13½p)
Vodafone	333p (+10½p)
S&U	345p (+10p)
Select App	594p (+26p)
Shield Diag	690p (+30p)
Eurotherm	389p (+16½p)
Sheriff Hldgs	340p (+13p)

FALLS:

B Matthews	97p (-9½p)
British Airways	670p (-32½p)
BG	258½p (-10p)
P&O	668p (-16p)
Trinity Int	492p (-11½p)
EMI	599½p (-10p)
Critchley	662½p (-10p)

Closing Prices Page 33

TEMPUS

A better policy

IT IS comforting to be told that you are £1 billion better off and it gave Britannic the courage to come clean about its provision for the pensions mis-selling fiasco. The insurer has been coy about its liability in the past, but a largely new executive team promises to dust out the cupboards and let some air into the boardroom.

The market could not get enough Britannic shares yesterday, fuelling an 11 per cent stock price rise. But aside from the boost provided by the orphan assets, where is the new profit going to come from?

Collecting door-to-door is a time-consuming business, costing 40p in every £1 of premium paid. Government plans to force the poor to provide for their old age will require imaginative but simple savings products, sold in vast numbers at the slimmest of margins. Even after ruthless cost-cutting it is difficult to see how Britannic could tender successfully for such business.

The life insurer has suggested a merger is the answer, arguing that the increased volumes of sales would reduce cost-income ratios. But the only sensible candidate is United Assurance, which is still sorting out its own merger. Prudential has been retreating from the home service market, leaving the field for the likes of Britannic. However, the Pru is quitting low-margin collection business because it does not pay decent returns. New regulation has made the process of selling savings products a more expensive business, requiring an investment in staff who may then demand better-paid jobs elsewhere. Unless Britannic has some clever cost-cutting ideas up its sleeve, the rating is undeserved.

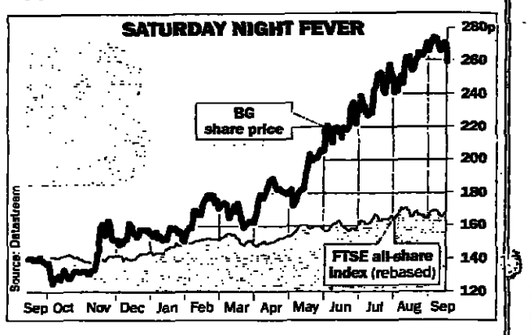
BG

SPINNING OFF BG's exploration business is out of the question, says chairman Richard Giordano, and a quick glance at BG's share price explains why. Hopes of super profits upstream are keeping the shares on the boil. The market had already factored-in the 8p full-year dividend announced yesterday and, clearly, a yield of 3.9 per cent is hardly thrilling when other utilities pay 6 per cent.

This exuberance is becoming irrational and investors who bought BG when this column recommended it earlier this year should now consider selling. Under its new management, the upstream operation is worth taking seriously as the company is committed to reducing its huge operating costs. However, aggressive projections of huge gas volumes from Karachaganak in 2001 require a lot to be taken on trust, not least a sale agreement to a customer that can pay a world market price for the fuel.

Even with generous assumptions, the upstream business is probably not worth a great deal more than 70p per share at present. Add to that the value of the international gas business and the post-buyback debt and you are left with £11.6 billion in utility assets, valued at 258p, paying a miserly yield of 4 per cent.

A sensible strategy would be to float off E&P and let it find its true price but that would leave BG's board running a dull old business.



Next

NEXT came perilously close yesterday to following Argos and Oasis into the netherworld of Retailers Who Have Let Their Fans Down. For a company of Next's reputation, like-for-like sales growth of 2 per cent is the equivalent of falling off a cliff, and the shares duly went the same way.

Further explanation provided grounds for a correction. The funeral of Diana, Princess of Wales, kept Britain out of the shops for one week out of the six under review. Hot weather in August and an early start to summer sales were other depressing factors. Moreover, sales growth in the last two weeks has stabilised at a higher level.

Even after taking into account all the mitigating factors it is clear that Next's customers are not spending with the same abandon in the second half as they did in the first and the company admits that the market is difficult. In good times such a strong brand can easily beat less talented retailers but the company is now scouting about looking for new products to pack its shelves, leaving questions about where it will find long-term growth in a weak market. On past performance it should get more than its fair share of consumer spending; that deserves a premium rating but the sector is past its peak.

Wassall

THE recent two-part sale of General Cable, the US copper wiremaker, has turned Wassall into a treasury, with a few widget-makers on the side. The new Meco design from MCG Closures may be the finest plastic bottle top in the world but, no matter how successful, it will have a marginal impact on Wassall's profits.

Wassall knows it needs a deal but it seems no closer to finding a use for its £300 million of cash. Its caution is admirable: the benchmark is the remarkable success of General Cable, which produced a £277 million profit (plus its own earnings) on an £177 million investment in barely three years. However, Wassall can remind investors that the General Cable purchase was itself preceded by a lengthy wait.

Wassall has taken stakes in TLG, the lighting group, and a 3 per cent share in McBride, the own-label soap and toiletries business. Both fit the bill as underperforming manufacturers, but an early move is unlikely given its public declaration of interest. While the bottle tops and American DIY businesses are performing well, buying Wassall shares currently represents an act of faith in management. Their strong record is not fully reflected in the current share price but a purchase still amounts to a leap in the dark.

EDITED BY CARL MORTISHED

BRITISH FUNDS

1997 High	Low	Stock	Price £	+/-	Int yld %	Gss red yld
SHORTS (under 5 years)						
101¹⁄₃₂	100	Treas 8¾% 1997	100		8.75	
106²⁹⁄₃₂	100¹⁵⁄₃₂	Exch 15% 1997	100¹⁵⁄₃₂	- ¹⁄₃₂	14.88	8.75
115²⁄₃₂	113²⁹⁄₃₂	Treas 14¾% 1998	115²⁄₃₂	- ¹⁄₃₂	4.01	8.91
103¹⁄₃₂	100²⁄₃₂	Exch 9¼% 1998	100²⁄₃₂	- ¹⁄₃₂	9.67	6.96
101¹⁄₃₂	100²⁄₃₂	Treas 7¼% 1998	100²⁄₃₂	- ¹⁄₃₂	7.24	7.00
110¹⁄₃₂	104²⁄₃₂	Treas 14% 1998-01	104²⁄₃₂	- ¹⁄₃₂	13.40	7.02
114¹⁄₃₂	108¹⁄₃₂	Treas 15¼% 1998	108¹⁄₃₂	- ¹⁄₃₂	14.31	6.92
109¹⁄₃₂	105¹⁵⁄₃₂	Exch 12% 1998	105²⁄₃₂	- ¹⁄₃₂	11.37	6.94
105¹⁄₃₂	102¹⁵⁄₃₂	Treas 9¾% 1999	103²⁄₃₂	- ¹⁄₃₂	9.20	6.87
111¹⁄₃₂	107¹⁄₃₂	Exch 12¾% 1999	107¹⁵⁄₃₂	- ¹⁄₃₂	11.28	6.91
109¹⁄₃₂	105¹⁵⁄₃₂	Treas 10¾% 1999	105¹⁵⁄₃₂	- ¹⁄₃₂	9.94	6.89
99¹⁄₃₂	96¹⁵⁄₃₂	Treas 6% 1999	98¹⁄₃₂	- ¹⁄₃₂	6.08	6.76
109¹⁄₃₂	106¹⁄₃₂	Conv 10¼% 1999	106¹⁄₃₂	- ¹⁄₃₂	9.61	6.89
106¹⁄₃₂	104¹⁄₃₂	Conv 9% 2000	104¹⁄₃₂	- ¹⁄₃₂	8.59	6.84
104¹⁵⁄₃₂	102¹⁄₃₂	Treas 8% 2000	103¹⁄₃₂	- ¹⁄₃₂	7.74	6.79
104²⁄₃₂	102²⁄₃₂	Treas 8¼% 2000	103²⁄₃₂	- ¹⁄₃₂	8.21	6.84
119¹⁄₃₂	114²⁄₃₂	Treas 13% 2000	115¹⁵⁄₃₂	- ¹⁄₃₂	9.14	6.84
112¹⁵⁄₃₂	99¹⁵⁄₃₂	Treas 10% 2001	109¹⁵⁄₃₂	- ¹⁄₃₂	9.14	6.84
101¹⁄₃₂	98²⁄₃₂	Treas 7% 2001	100¹⁄₃₂	- ¹⁄₃₂	6.95	6.79
MEDIUMS (5 to 15 years)						
101¹⁄₃₂	97¹⁵⁄₃₂	Treas 7% 2002	101¹⁄₃₂	- ¹⁄₃₂	6.93	6.72
122¹⁄₃₂	109²⁄₃₂	Treas 9¼% 2002	112²⁄₃₂	- ¹⁄₃₂	8.70	6.82
105²⁹⁄₃₂	102²⁄₃₂	Treas 8% 2003	103²⁄₃₂	- ¹⁄₃₂	7.58	6.76
116¹⁄₃₂	111²⁄₃₂	Treas 10% 2003	115¹⁵⁄₃₂	- ¹⁄₃₂	8.66	6.81
116²⁹⁄₃₂	113²⁄₃₂	Treas 11¼% 2001-04	114²⁹⁄₃₂	- ¹⁄₃₂	10.07	6.88
88¹⁄₃₂	82¹⁵⁄₃₂	Fund 3½% 1999-04	86²⁄₃₂	- ¹⁄₃₂	3.96	5.58
115²⁄₃₂	108¹⁵⁄₃₂	Conv 9¼% 2004	113²⁄₃₂	- ¹⁄₃₂	8.25	6.77
100²⁄₃₂	94¹⁄₃₂	Treas 8¼% 2004	100²⁄₃₂	- ¹⁄₃₂	6.74	6.73
110²⁹⁄₃₂	104²⁄₃₂	Treas 8½% 2005	110²⁄₃₂	- ¹⁄₃₂	7.67	6.75
122²⁹⁄₃₂	110²⁹⁄₃₂	Conv 9½% 2005	115²⁹⁄₃₂	- ¹⁄₃₂	8.20	6.78
129¹⁵⁄₃₂	124²⁹⁄₃₂	Treas 12¼% 2003-05	128¹⁄₃₂	- ¹⁄₃₂	9.76	6.82
105²⁄₃₂	99²⁄₃₂	Treas 7¼% 2006	105²⁄₃₂	- ¹⁄₃₂	7.14	6.78
107¹⁄₃₂	99¹⁵⁄₃₂	Treas 7¼% 2008	106²⁹⁄₃₂	- ¹⁄₃₂	7.28	6.75
104¹⁵⁄₃₂	100²⁄₃₂	Treas 8% 2002-06	104²⁄₃₂	- ¹⁄₃₂	7.85	6.90
123²⁄₃₂	115²⁹⁄₃₂	Treas 11¼% 2003-07	121²⁄₃₂	- ¹⁄₃₂	9.65	6.83
112²⁹⁄₃₂	105¹⁄₃₂	Treas 9¼% 2003	112²⁹⁄₃₂	- ¹⁄₃₂	7.58	6.78
104	98²⁄₃₂	Treas 7¼% 2007	103²⁹⁄₃₂	- ²⁄₃₂	6.98	6.71
117²⁹⁄₃₂	108²⁹⁄₃₂	Treas 9% 2008	117²⁹⁄₃₂	- ¹⁄₃₂	7.67	6.75
110²⁹⁄₃₂	101	Treas 8% 2009	110¹⁵⁄₃₂ †	- ²⁄₃₂	7.27	6.76
LONGS (over 15 years)						
99²⁹⁄₃₂	86²⁄₃₂	Treas 6¼% 2010	95²⁹⁄₃₂	- ²⁄₃₂	6.54	6.76
119²⁄₃₂	109²⁄₃₂	Conv 9% 2011	119²⁹⁄₃₂	- ¹⁄₃₂	7.51	6.76
120²⁹⁄₃₂	109²⁄₃₂	Treas 9% 2012	120¹⁵⁄₃₂ †	- ¹⁄₃₂	7.46	6.77
90¹⁄₃₂	80²⁹⁄₃₂	Treas 5¼% 2008-12	90¹⁄₃₂	+ ¹⁄₃₂	6.09	6.57
112²⁹⁄₃₂	100²⁹⁄₃₂	Treas 8% 2013	112²⁹⁄₃₂	- ¹⁄₃₂	7.14	6.75
108²⁵⁄₃₂	98²⁹⁄₃₂	Treas 7¼% 2012-15	108²⁹⁄₃₂	- ¹⁄₃₂	7.12	6.78
113¹⁄₃₂	101²⁹⁄₃₂	Treas 8% 2015	113²⁹⁄₃₂	- ¹⁄₃₂	7.03	6.68
122²⁹⁄₃₂	103²⁹⁄₃₂	Treas 8¾% 2017	122²⁹⁄₃₂	- ¹⁄₃₂	7.17	6.72
116²⁹⁄₃₂	101²⁹⁄₃₂	Tr 8% 2021	116²⁹⁄₃₂	- ¹⁄₃₂	6.89	6.65
UNDATED						
52²⁹⁄₃₂	43²⁵⁄₃₂	War Ln 3½%	52²⁹⁄₃₂	+ ²⁄₃₂	6.73	-
38²⁵⁄₃₂	30²⁹⁄₃₂	Treas 2½%	38²⁵⁄₃₂	+ ²⁄₃₂	6.87	-
56²⁷⁄₃₂	45²⁹⁄₃₂	Consols 4%	56²⁷⁄₃₂	+2²⁷⁄₃₂	7.04	-
INDEX-LINKED on projected inflation of:					10%	5%
189²⁹⁄₃₂	184²⁹⁄₃₂	Treas I 2½% 2001	189²⁹⁄₃₂ †	+ ²⁄₃₂	2.75	3.48
185²⁵⁄₃₂	180²⁹⁄₃₂	Treas I 2½% 2003	185²⁵⁄₃₂	+ ²⁄₃₂	2.95	3.47
120²⁹⁄₃₂	117²⁹⁄₃₂	Treas I 4⅛% 2004	120	+ ¹⁄₃₂	3.00	3.45
197²⁹⁄₃₂	190	Treas I 2% 2006	197²⁹⁄₃₂	+ ¹⁄₃₂	3.10	3.44
178²⁵⁄₃₂	170²⁹⁄₃₂	Treas I 2½% 2009	178²⁵⁄₃₂	+ ²⁄₃₂	3.13	3.48
189²⁹⁄₃₂	179²⁹⁄₃₂	Treas I 2½% 2011	185²⁹⁄₃₂	+ ²⁄₃₂	3.17	3.41
153²⁵⁄₃₂	146²⁹⁄₃₂	Treas I 2½% 2013	153²⁵⁄₃₂	+ ¹⁄₃₂	3.19	3.40
164²⁹⁄₃₂	153²⁹⁄₃₂	Treas I 2½% 2016	164²⁹⁄₃₂	+ ¹⁄₃₂	3.21	3.41
150²⁹⁄₃₂	147²⁹⁄₃₂	Treas I 2½% 2020	150²⁹⁄₃₂	+ ¹⁄₃₂	3.26	3.43
132²⁹⁄₃₂	122²⁹⁄₃₂	Treas I 2½% 2024	132²⁹⁄₃₂	+ ¹⁄₃₂	3.27	3.42
129²⁹⁄₃₂	119²⁹⁄₃₂	Treas I 4⅛% 2030	129²⁹⁄₃₂	+ ¹⁄₃₂	3.27	3.41

LONDON FINANCIAL FUTURES

	Period	Open	High	Low	Sett	Vol
Long Gilt	Sep 97 ..	117-22	117-25	117-15	117-19	884
Previous open interest 173856	Dec 97 ..	117-09	117-23	116-26	117-03	156107
German Govt Bond (Bund)	Dec 97 ..	102.45	102.54	102.34	102.47	183136
Previous open interest 259509	Mar 98 .	101.62	101.71	101.61	101.71	580
Italian Govt Bond (BTP)	Dec 97 ..	110.70	111.00	110.66	110.70	51533
Previous open interest 111802	Mar 98 .	110.03	110.63	110.03	110.60	586
Japanese Govt Bond (JGB)	Dec 97 ..	127.66	127.75	127.64	127.70	1884
	Mar 98 .	126.76	126.84	126.76	126.77445	-
Three Mth Sterling	Sep 97 ..	92.74	92.76	92.74	92.74	9334
	Dec 97 ..	92.74	92.75	92.64	92.65	74127
Previous open interest 69029	Mar 98 .	92.80	92.84	92.69	92.71	69585
Three Mth Euromark	Oct 97 ..	96.61	96.61	96.60	96.60	350
Previous open interest 1565380	Mar 98 .	96.34	96.25	96.22	96.24	48699
Three Mth Eurolira	Dec 97 ..	93.82	93.85	93.81	93.82	18737
Previous open interest 347299	Mar 98 .	94.48	94.56	94.45	94.49	25088
Three Mth Euroyen	Mar 98 .				99.33	0
	Jun 98 ..				99.32	0
Three Mth Euroswiss	Dec 97 ..	98.16	98.26	98.14	98.25	14051
Previous open interest 136493	Mar 98 .	97.95	98.04	97.94	98.03	9084
Three Mth ECU	Dec 97 ..	95.59	95.64	95.57	95.57	550
Previous open interest 30954	Mar 98 .	95.51	95.51	95.48	95.49	422
FTSE 100	Sep 97 ..	5044.0	5062.0	4997.0	5035.0	24929
Previous open interest 80865	Dec 97 ..	5114.0	5130.0	5061.0	5101.5	12807

MONEY RATES (%)

Base Rates: Clearing Banks 7 Finance Hse 7
Discount Market Loans: O/night high: 7 Low 6½ Week fixed: 6¹⁵⁄₁₆
Treasury Bills (Dis)Buy: 2 mth 6¹⁵⁄₁₆ ; 3 mth 6¹⁵⁄₁₆ , Sell: 2 mth 6¹⁵⁄₁₆ ; 3 mth: 6¹⁵⁄₁₆ .

	1 mth	2 mth	3 mth	6 mth	12 mth
Prime Bank Bills (Dis):	7-6¹⁵⁄₁₆	7¹⁵⁄₁₆-7¹³⁄₁₆	7¹⁵⁄₁₆-7	7¹⁵⁄₁₆-7⅛	
Sterling Money Rates:	7¹⁵⁄₁₆-7¹³⁄₁₆	7¹⁵⁄₁₆-7¹³⁄₁₆	7¹⁵⁄₁₆-7¹³⁄₁₆	7¹⁵⁄₁₆-7¹³⁄₁₆	7¹⁵⁄₁₆-7¹³⁄₁₆
Interbank:	7¹⁵⁄₁₆-7¹³⁄₁₆	7¹⁵⁄₁₆-7¹³⁄₁₆	7¹⁵⁄₁₆-7¹³⁄₁₆	7¹⁵⁄₁₆-7¹³⁄₁₆	7¹⁵⁄₁₆-7¹³⁄₁₆
Overnight: open 6¹⁵⁄₁₆, close 6¹³⁄₁₆ .					
Local Authority Deps:	7⅛	n/a	7⅛	7⅛	7⅛
Sterling CDs:	7¹⁵⁄₁₆-7¹³⁄₁₆	7¹⁵⁄₁₆-7¹³⁄₁₆	7¹⁵⁄₁₆-7¹³⁄₁₆	7¹⁵⁄₁₆-7¹³⁄₁₆	7¹⁵⁄₁₆-7¹³⁄₁₆
Dollar CDs:	5.56	n/a	5.60	5.70	5.85
Building Society CDs:	7¹⁵⁄₁₆-7¹³⁄₁₆	7¹⁵⁄₁₆-7¹³⁄₁₆	7¹⁵⁄₁₆-7¹³⁄₁₆	7¹⁵⁄₁₆-7¹³⁄₁₆	7¹⁵⁄₁₆-7¹³⁄₁₆

EUROPEAN MONEY-DEPOSITS (%)

Currency	7 day	1 mth	3 mth	6 mth	Call
Dollar:	5⅝-5¼	5⅝-5¹⁄₁₆	5¹³⁄₁₆-5⅝	5¹⁵⁄₁₆-5¾	5¼-4¾
Deutschemark:	3¹⁄₁₆-2¹⁵⁄₁₆	3¹⁄₁₆-2¹⁵⁄₁₆	3⅛-3	3¹⁄₁₆-3	3¹⁄₁₆-2¾
French Franc	3¼-3	3¼-3⅛	3¹⁄₁₆-3	3¼-3⅛	3¼-2¾
Swiss Franc	1¼-1	1¹³⁄₁₆-1½	1¹⁵⁄₁₆-1¾	1¹³⁄₁₆-1¾	1¼-¾
Yen	⅝-½	⅝-½	⅝-½	⅝-½	1-par

GOLD/PRECIOUS METALS (Baird & Co)

Bullion: Open $320.30-320.60 Close $320.40-320.90 High: $320.40-320.90
Low: $319.30-319.80 AM: $319.95 PM: $320.45

Krugerrand: $320.00-322.00 (£200.00-202.00)

Platinum: $420.00 (£263.00) Silver: $4.63 (£2.885) Palladium: $187.00 (£117.10)

STERLING SPOT AND FORWARD RATES

Mkt Rates for Sept 17	Range	Close	1 month	3 month
Amsterdam	3.1737-3.1967	3.1890-3.1914	1¼-1pr	3¼-3pr
Brussels	58.130-58.570	58.433-58.523	21-16pr	58-49pr
Copenhagen	10.726-10.809	10.781-10.789	¼-¼pr	1-¾pr
Dublin	1.0649-1.0736	1.0691-1.0713	11-5pr	34-27pr
Frankfurt	2.8183-2.8375	2.8325-2.8347	1-¾pr	2¼-2pr
Lisbon	285.98-288.53	287.83-288.11	¼-¼pr	1¼-1pr
Madrid	237.72-239.54	239.02-239.25	41-31pr	126-108pr
Milan	2747.7-2771.5	2764.3-2767.9	16-11pr	50-38pr
Montreal	2.2038-3.2243	2.2225-2.2243	0.69-0.63pr	1.40-1.32pr
New York	1.5894-1.6025	1.6018-1.6025	0.21-0.19pr	0.618-0.587pr
Oslo	11.487-11.695	11.487-11.495	¼-¼pr	1-¾pr
Paris	9.4500-9.5390	9.5150-9.5232	3¼-3pr	9¼-8¾pr
Stockholm	12.120-12.241	12.197-12.214	¼-¼pr	1-¾pr
Tokyo	191.52-192.98	192.37-192.57	1¼-1pr	3¼-3¼pr
Vienna	19.831-19.981	19.933-19.949	¼-¼pr	2-1¾pr
Zurich	2.3071-2.3532	2.3276-2.3290	1¼-1¼pr	3¼-3¼pr

Premium - pr. Discount - ds.

DOLLAR RATES

Australia	1.3925-1.3935
Austria	12.46-12.47
Belgium (Com)	36.53-36.58
Canada	1.3868-1.3873
Denmark	6.7425-6.7445
France	5.9519-5.9539
Germany	1.7707-1.7712
Hong Kong	7.7443-7.7453
Ireland	1.4960-1.4980
Italy	1725.98-1726.98
Japan	120.30-120.25
Malaysia	2.9890-2.9940
Netherlands	1.9942-1.9952
Norway	7.1754-7.1804
Portugal	179.91-180.02
Singapore	1.5140-1.5150
Spain	149.41-149.51
Sweden	7.6259-7.6334
Switzerland	1.4553-1.4558

OTHER STERLING

Argentina peso	1.6008-1.6035
Australia dollar	2.2304-2.2333
Bahrain dinar	0.5935-0.6075
Brazil real	1.7477-1.7521
China yuan	13.040-13.345
Cyprus pound	0.8230-0.8420
Finland markka	8.3700-8.5110
Greece drachma	439.25-449.75
Hong Kong dollar	12.4002-12.4095
India rupee	57.60-58.90
Indonesia rupiah	n/a
Kuwait dinar KD	0.4795-0.4905
Malaysia ringgit	4.7860-4.7970
New Zealand dollar	2.5164-2.5200
Pakistan rupee	62.95 Buy
Saudi Arabia riyal	5.7300-5.8650
Singapore dollar	2.4242-2.4273
S Africa rand (com)	7.3710-7.5400
U A E dirham	5.7825-5.9185

*Barclays Bank GTS * Lloyds Bank*

FTSE VOLUMES

3i	2,900	Ladbroke	1,700
ASDA Gp	4,800	Land Secs	2,100
Abbey Nti	3,100	Legal & Gn	3,100
Allnce & Leic	4,900	Lloyds TSB	7,200
Allied Dom	2,400	LucasVarity	4,300
Alt Foods	350	Marks Spr	7,000
BAA	973	Mercury Ast	777
BAT Inds	8,700	NatWst Bk	5,400
BG	10,400	Nat Grid	5,400
BOC	1,200	Nal Power	4,000
BP	4,000	Next	9,000
BSkyB	1,700	Orange	527
BTR	10,600

هكذا من الأحداث

New chapter begins in publisher's life

Harcourt Brace Jovanovich used to be America's largest publisher of textbooks. The company, built on a roster of distinguished authors including Virginia Woolf and T. S. Eliot, made so much money that it was able to diversify into theme parks. Sea World and Cypress Gardens became the fun parts of the portfolio.

The party came to an abrupt end in 1987, when Robert Maxwell, then at the height of his arrogance and power, made a hostile $2.2 billion (£1.4 bilion) bid for Harcourt. The attack ultimately failed, but it was a pyrrhic victory for Harcourt. Other than nearly destroying the company, it ended any chance that Peter Jovanovich, the son of William Jovanovich, the chief executive who had run the group since 1954, would build on his father's work.

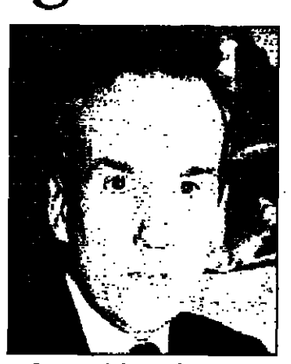
The younger Jovanovich, now 48, has just surfaced as chairman and chief executive of Addison Wesley Longman, the educational arm of Pearson, the *Financial Times* to Madame Tussaud's group. The trim, preppy-looking, American remembers the Maxwell defence as a frantic, yet wasted, era in which Harcourt was more concerned with paying off its crippling debt than publishing books.

Harcourt foiled Maxwell's advance by paying a cash dividend of $40. It financed the "bribe" by issuing $1.8 billion of junk bonds, the debt instruments that compensate investors for their dubious credit ratings with high interest payments. The payments, of course, eliminated Harcourt's profits and the share price went through the floor. William Jovanovich was forced to sell the theme parks. Exhausted, he stepped down in 1990 and Peter was called into action.

The situation was desperate. "We were either going to sell the company or go bankrupt," Peter said. "I quickly learnt to negotiate with angry junk bond holders." Two years later, he sold the company his father built to General Cinema for $1.4 billion. He was a free man, but not for long.

McGraw-Hill, the market leader in the US textbook market, snapped him up and made him president of Macmillan/McGraw-Hill School Publishing, a joint venture between the two companies. The irony was delicious. Macmillan Inc was the publishing house that Maxwell pursued, and won, after the failed Harcourt bid. "I couldn't get away from the man," Peter said.

Patrick Quinn, the senior editor of Educational Marketing, a US newsletter that covers the textbook industry, said the younger Jovanovich distinguished himself at Macmillan/McGraw-Hill with the launch of several classroom hits. One of them, the *Adventures in Time and Space* social studies



Jovanovich: work cut out

series, took 60 per cent of the Texas market. Mr Quinn said: "I would say that Peter was instrumental in leading McGraw-Hill to several great successes."

In 1995, Jovanovich became president of McGraw-Hill's educational and professional publishing group, one of the top jobs in the industry worldwide. He will not say why he left the company, but it is an industry axiom that your chances of rising to the top at McGraw-Hill increase dramatically if you are a member of the founding McGraw family. Peter was not.

In the spring, David Veit, Pearson's senior director in the US, introduced him to Marjorie Scardino, Pearson's new chief executive. They took an instant liking to each other and in late July she offered him the job as the head of Addison Wesley Longman.

Addison is enormous. Its sales last year were about $950 million, accounting for more than a third of Pearson's annual sales. It is the leading player in English language training in America and internationally, but lags well behind in the school age and the college markets, where McGraw-Hill and Simon & Schuster reign supreme. In short, Jovanovich has his work cut out for him.

He admits that margins are not up to industry standards and, in the college market particularly, Addison has relied too heavily on titles that have reached their sell-by dates. The division also suffers because the American and British sides of the business were never properly integrated. "There has been no transatlantic viewpoint," Jovanovich said.

He has been at the job for less than two months and will not reveal Addison's growth strategy, other than to say that it will involve years of hard slog. New writers, editors, designers and salespeople will be recruited and new markets are to be exploited, notably in Asia. More large acquisitions, such as last year's £369 million purchase of HarperCollins Educational, are unlikely until the operating units on both sides of the Atlantic have been melded together.

The City has high hopes for Peter Jovanovich in particular and Pearson's educational division in general. Pearson has been accused of being unfocused and analysts are putting pressure on it to sell businesses, such as the Lazards investment bank, that have no obvious links with the rest of the group. But Addison has emerged as a core holding with strong potential for growth. The market is working in Addison's favour, especially in the US, where more children than ever are entering the school system and school budgets are expanding.

William Jovanovich, who is 77 and lives in San Diego, is delighted that his son is making a name for himself in the textbooks business, albeit one that does not carry the family name. Peter said: "I always talk to my dad about book publishing. He's in the pantheon of great educational publishers and he's a good sounding board."

ERIC REGULY

It is not only America that should count the cost of new federalism



AMERICAN AGENDA
BRONWEN MADDOX



Some see Scotland as embodying the spirit of the new federalism, as money and power shift from Washington

Americans have been almost as quick as Downing Street to take credit for the flush of emotion in Britain after the death of Diana, Princess of Wales. At last, commentators have argued, Britain is curing itself of the stiff upper lip, recognising the healthiness of American-style openness.

That psychological triumphalism has emerged seamlessly from the economic boastfulness in which the Clinton Administration has indulged itself this summer: the view, voiced most loudly during the French elections and the Denver G8 summit, that the US has perfected the formula for prosperity.

Now there is Scottish devolution. It, too, has been greeted by US politicians as a step, albeit long overdue and clumsily designed, towards an American or Germanic federal system. One of the parts of the US Constitution about which Americans feel most passionate is the Tenth Amendment, which directs that any powers not explicitly given to the federal government are "reserved to the states . . . or the people".

Some also see the Scottish votes as embodying the spirit of the "new federalism", the shift of power and money from Washington to state governments which has been a Republican rallying cry for nearly two decades, and is currently the strongest flavour in US politics.

These days, the most powerful politicians in the US are not the battered old Washington warhorses familiar to British TV screens, but the state governors. In their state capitols, each edifice a copy of the Washington Capitol's white dome, they are often more able to execute their ideas than the President or congressional leaders.

The trouble is that the new federalism is not working nearly as well as is claimed. Its failures contain warnings for Britain, not to mention Canada, Mexico, India and the other nations that have caught the bug. States are exercising their new strength by scuppering many national initiatives, from trade policy to deregulation of crucial industries, jeopardising the overall competitiveness of America. It is also easy to overlook the fact that the roots of the movement lie not just in ideology, but in a wrinkle in internal US finances that has left state governments flush with money. That may not last, and states may find themselves saddled with financial burdens that they cannot afford.

President Clinton's attempt yesterday to salvage the nationwide $368 billion deal between government and the tobacco industry is a reminder of the current impotence of Washington in the face of state governments. The immediate hurdle for the White House, of course, is to strike a deal with the Republican-controlled Congress, whose leaders have made clear that they would prefer to shelve the subject until next year. But the greater obstacle is that state governments are now jumping the gun, striking unilateral settlements with individual tobacco companies, which may prompt the national deal to unravel.

Less dramatic, but more important for the US economy, is the failure to push through deregulation and stimulate competition in telecommunications and electricity, two industries which affect every household and business in the country. For American families, the local electricity bill is often their most expensive utility by far, with bills running into hundreds of dollars a month. This year's Economic Report of the President was provoked to address the subject bluntly under the heading "Reasons for the delay in deregulating electricity and telephone". It put part of the blame firmly on jurisdictional squabbles between federal and state regulators.

Developing national environmental standards, even for pollution that crosses state borders, has also proved tricky. It also seems that the President's plan for national school tests is doomed to die, even though employers argue that uniform testing is badly needed to raise standards. In the face of this fragmentation, some are resolutely optimistic. Competition between states should eventually push utility deregulation through, argues Joseph Stiglitz, the World Bank's chief economist, who was previously chairman of the US Council of Economic Advisers. States do not want to lose businesses to their neighbours because their costs are too high. But the problem is that the same competition threatens to reduce some standards, such as environmental rules, to the lowest common denominator, undermining popular policies that benefit the whole country.

A second worry is whether the governors are as able to pay their way as they believe. At the moment they are riding high, courtesy of Washington. For years, the federal government has paid them grants for welfare and social services. These transfers have had an important effect in smoothing out levels of benefits and social services between states, and damping down migration across state borders. They have also allowed the states quietly to run budget surpluses each year while the federal government runs a much-publicised deficit.

That may change. Much of the current surplus is something of a windfall, an echo from the recession. The grants were originally based on the number of people on welfare, but with radical reforms, and the economic boom, the numbers are plummeting. Under the new rules, states will have more responsibility for paying for their own social services.

The result, some fear, will be much more migration within the US, as people and businesses uproot to avoid rising local taxes in the poorer states. Massachusetts, historically a high-tax state, took years to recover from emigration to New Hampshire, Vermont, New York and Connecticut. As the inner cities have found, it can be hard to halt the downward financial spiral caused by the flight of the affluent.

No one pretends to predict the economic and social consequences of the new federalism with precision, although the Urban Institute, a Washington think-tank, has just embarked on a three-year, $30 million (£18 million) study in a welcome attempt to move the argument beyond anecdote. But the problems already appearing behind the fashionable rhetoric for states' rights contain lessons that apply to any country.

Above all, it is clear that devolution of power from the centre, like many experiments, looks most appealing in times of prosperity. There is no need to conclude, as pessimists do, that too much democracy can damage your health.

But unpicking layers of regional subsidies, the financial glue of a nation, has unpredictable results which may not help the country as a whole. Nor may they be entirely welcome, when they finally become clear, to the inhabitants of the poorer regions, even though they may have been among the most passionate campaigners for local autonomy.

> "Problems appearing behind the fashionable rhetoric for states' rights contain lessons that apply to any country"

Old guard at The Savoy have reason to be grateful

Unpopular reforms are paying off, say

Jon Ashworth and **Dominic Walsh**

Ramón Pajares was loudly booed when he took the Savoy stage barely three years ago, but his critics are starting to eat their words. His unpopular reforms aimed at dragging a fading collection of hotels into the modern age have seen their worth reflected in yet another robust set of financial results.

Claridge's, newly revitalised with a £40 million facelift, is turning away bookings. The Berkeley, which had £11 million spent on it, is enjoying spectacular success with Vong, its fashionable eaterie, where sales have soared 400 per cent in two years. The Savoy, feeling the benefits of an £18 million overhaul, has just been voted Hotel of the Year by readers of *Executive Travel* magazine — snatching the crown away from the Far East for the first time in 15 years.

Repeat business across the group has risen from 49 to 60 per cent. Huge resources are being devoted to training — £425,000 this year alone — and a flag-waving tour of 34 cities cost a further £1.8 million.

The Savoy old guard don't like this sort of thing, of course, arguing that only a foreigner (Mr Pajares hails from Catalonia) would be brazen enough to meddle with such icons of Britishness. Foreign or not, Mr Pajares is an hotelier, first and foremost, with 20 years with Four Seasons under his belt, and he has risen above the catcalls. As he said recently: "I am giving back these buildings the pride they deserve so they can be here for another hundred years."

Most of the work has been devoted to Claridge's, a favourite of Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother, which has been largely untouched since the 1930s. The present building was finished in 1898 to a design by C. W. Stephens, the architect responsible for Harrods. It took its name in 1854 when William and Marianne Claridge bought an existing hotel on the site.

Leading interior designers including Tessa Kennedy and John Stefanides were let loose on Claridge's 197 rooms and suites, blending Art Deco and Victorian influences with direct dial telephones, and other modern executive tools.

The idea was to introduce a fresh look and lure in the prey — the young, deep-pocketed, business executive. Two former private apartments on the top floor have been turned into penthouse suites with commanding views across central London. Former office space has been converted into executive double rooms, and guests have the run of a new health and fitness centre.

Captains of industry are regular occupants of the penthouse suites, which cost up to £2,300 a night, excluding VAT, but including the services of a personal butler. Double rooms typically cost £325 a night.

Competitors include the 90-room Lanesborough, created from the shell of the St George's Hospital at Hyde Park Corner at a cost of £85 million. Another arch-rival is the 210-room Dorchester, owned by the Brunei Investment Agency, who lavished £95 million on refurbishments. Not everyone has the luxury of a blank cheque. As François Touzin, general manager of Claridge's, says: "We are not the Sultan of Brunei. We had to ask shareholders for the money."

Meanwhile, the financial transformation of The Savoy Group looks set to continue. Analysts expect pre-tax profits of about £23 million this year, with perhaps £30 million in 1998. The previous high was £14.3 million in 1987 under Giles Shepard, now at the Ritz. On top of his annual bonuses, Mr Pajares is in line for a one-off payment of £150,000 when profits hit a figure near £20 million. He has earned it.

Wilmslow boy

COULD Jim Sutcliffe, slung out of the *Prudential* last Friday after he fell out with Sir Peter Davis, resurface at United Assurance? Institutional investors, who feel United Assurance has been losing its way of late, would like to see Mr Sutcliffe in charge. He is still a respected figure in the life assurance industry and leaves the Prudential at the end of the month.

Alas, two doubts remain. The job of shaking up United Assurance, created by the merger almost a year ago of United Friendly and Refuge, would require relocation to Wilmslow, Cheshire. A fine town, I am sure, but some way from the fleshpots of the capital. Secondly, will United Assurance be willing to match his salary? Sutcliffe made £437,000 including bonus last year, and he is on an 18-month contract so he could theoretically walk out with more than half a million. But his pay-off will depend on how quickly he can find another job, which gives little incentive to rush. All this suggests some tricky discussions may be taking place even now in the Sutcliffe household.



"Well, so much for your minimalist phase"

□ *THE planned merger of derivatives trading in France, Germany and Switzerland, creating a rival to the City, was formally announced in London at the Glaziers Hall, south of London Bridge. This is the only livery hall located outside the area ruled by the Corporation of London. So ensuring, City wits were saying, that no elite snatch squads of aldermen, their hats decked terrifyingly with ostrich plumes and driving highly trained suicide flocks of sheep before them, could surround the building and cart the offenders off to the Tower of London.*

THE TIMES
CITY DIARY

Giving up

IN THE days before political correctness there used to be pressure on everyone working for the cigarette companies to puff away like beagles. Old City hands will recall briefings at BAT Industries when the air was virtually opaque, the board chain-smoked to a man and handfuls of coffin nails were given out at the entrance. All is different now, even if no one at the companies can quite bring themselves to admit that their products are bad for you.

So Gallaher, the fag company spun out of American Brands, has stubbed out an age-old tradition. Pensioners of the company used to be entitled to receive 200 free gaspers a month. This cost £4 million a year, even if it did tend to save on pension costs as the years drew on. Now the hand-outs have been scrapped.

□ *UNHELPFUL, unsympathetic and unprofessional was the verdict on tax officials and their approach to the general public who pay their wages. It could not have come at a worse time for those millions who now have less than a fortnight to get their self-assessment forms in or be forced to do the sums themselves. So let it here be placed on record that I rang the self-assessment helpline a couple of days ago, while struggling with my own form. And they could not have been more helpful, sympathetic and professional.*

Write-off

IS THIS the first signs of a tougher regime as Marjorie Scardino shakes up Pearson? An internal memo tells staff at Pearson Professional, which includes financial magazines such as *Investors Chronicle*, that Peter Warwick will not be chief executive there after October 10. It is all about focusing on fewer businesses, and the division has recently been slimmed by a disposal. Other opportunities to exploit his talents are being sought, and Pearson is keen to keep him after 19 years of service. But no guarantees. This from a company that has a reputation of being one of those benign concerns from which no one is ever sacked.

MARTIN WALLER



Scardino: signs of a tough new approach at Pearson?

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Claremont Garments trims dividend forecast

BY GEORGE SIVELL

SHARES in Claremont Garments, the clothing manufacturer, fell 12p to 94½p yesterday after the group revealed a cut in the forecast dividend for the year to 5p compared with 9.87p in the previous year.

The Marks & Spencer supplier reported a fall in pre-tax profits from £2.7 million to £965,000 in the six months to June 30. Operating profits fell from £3.6 million to £2.4 million on sales up from £84.4 million to £86.4 million.

Earnings fell from 3.5p to 1.3p per share. However, an uncovered 2p interim dividend will be paid, down from 4.62p last time. Peter Wiegand, chairman, said: "While we expect a much-improved operating performance in the second half against 1996, it is unlikely that in the second half of the year we will achieve the level of operating profit made in the comparable period of 1995."

Mr Wiegand says that the inability to replace staff quickly after its recent restructuring will lose the group £9 million to £10 million of sales in the full year. He said that after the plant closure in Glasgow and consolidation at other sites the group did not replace the UK labour force at the same rate as demand picked up. He says the loss of sales had cost a "few million" pounds in profit.

The group is, however, already getting more offshore capacity on stream. Its Tunisian lingerie operation is preparing to start production later in the year. Coupled with a completion of staff training in Britain, Mr Wiegand said the group will be on a better footing at the end of the year.

Marks & Spencer business currently accounts for about 95 per cent of turnover at the group, which is M&S's fifth-largest supplier. This turnover split is set to rise as the group sells its only non-M&S supplier, Bellrise, which makes clothing for Next.

ROBIN MAYES



Peter Wilson, Gallaher chairman, left, with Philip Burchell, finance director, after reporting sales up 6.6 per cent yesterday

Tobacco adverts ban in 2000, says Gallaher chief

BY CHRIS AYRES

THE BAN on tobacco advertising could take another three years to come into effect because of a shortage of parliamentary time, one of Britain's leading cigarette manufacturers said yesterday.

Gallaher, whose Silk Cut and Benson and Hedges brands are smoked by an estimated six million Britons, made the prediction as it reported a 6.6 per cent rise in half-year sales to £2.1 million. The company said its share of the UK market increased from 39 per cent to 39.5 per cent.

Peter Wilson, chairman and chief executive, said: "The matter of the advertising ban has not gone to Parliament yet and given the availability of parliamentary time and the need to draft legislation it could be a while before any change comes about. It's hard to speculate exactly how long it will take, but my opinion is that it will be in 2000 rather than 1997."

The Government is expected shortly to produce a White Paper on the proposed ban, which has provoked protests from cigarette manufacturers and sports bodies that rely heavily on advertising revenue from tobacco companies.

Mr Wilson declined to comment on the size of his company's current advertising budget, although it is estimated that British tobacco companies spend a total of £50 million annually on promoting their products. An advertising ban, if it ever came, would not significantly damage Gallaher's business, he said. "We think our brands have already been well established and awareness is very high."

The company, which was demerged from American Brands in May, reported a 7 per cent rise in pre-tax profits yesterday, from £156 million to £167 million. Earnings per share were 17.9p, and a dividend of 9.625p will be paid on November 3.

The company said that increased duty on cigarettes in the United Kingdom had stifled the cigarette market and had encouraged the smuggling of tobacco products.

Gallaher estimates that more than 70 per cent of the UK's hand-rolling tobacco market is taken up by goods smuggled from the Continent, where a 50-gram bag of its Old Holborn brand is £6 cheaper than in Britain.

John Laing builds on property market recovery

BY ADAM JONES

JOHN LAING, the house-building and construction company, has increased interim profits 43 per cent, aided by buoyancy in the property market and modest improvement in the beleaguered UK construction sector.

Pre-tax profits for the first half of 1997 rose to £12.4 million on turnover up from £574 million to £634 million.

The profit margin in the construction division, which provides most of the turnover, was 0.3 per cent. The company is aiming for 2 per cent by 2000.

Two Private Finance Initiative (PFI) construction projects for which Laing is the preferred bidder, the Norfolk and Norwich Hospital and the Joint Service Command and Staff College, are likely to receive final authorisation in the second half, the company said.

The company has spent £7 million bidding for PFI contracts, £4 million of which will be recovered when the two projects are finalised. It is preferred bidder on a third, the National Physical Laboratory.

The average sale price of a Laing home rose from £59,000 to £130,000, a result of the growing inclusion of more luxurious properties. Sir Martin Laing, chairman, said that price increases were concentrated on southern England. Prices were flat in Scotland.

Laing sold 680 UK homes in the half and expects to sell 1,600 to 1,700 in the full year, in addition to 750 in the US. The company said that it owns enough land for two-and-a-half years of UK development.

An interim dividend of 3.5p (3p) is to be paid partly as a foreign income dividend.

BUSINESS ROUNDUP

Somerfield buoyed by sales progress

SOMERFIELD said that sales in the first 16 weeks of the current year were slightly ahead of the same period a year earlier. Shareholders at yesterday's annual meeting were told by Andrew Thomas, chairman, that the group is encouraged by progress in the current financial year. In particular, operating margins continue to show improvement, primarily through higher gross margins as a result of buying savings and better mix. Mr Thomas said: "Against a background of continued food price deflation, overall sales for the first 16 weeks are slightly ahead of the corresponding period last year." In the Somerfield facia stores, like-for-like sales volume growth was ahead of that achieved throughout 1996-97. Mr Thomas added. Shares of Somerfield rose ½p yesterday to 197½p.

Mr Thomas added: "We continue to focus our primary efforts on improving the offer to our customers and, since the year end, have accelerated the reshaping of our portfolio with two new stores opened, five under construction, 14 new conversions and contracts exchanged for the disposal of a further 36."

Crucible succession

JAMES SPOONER, the non-executive chairman of Morgan Crucible, the engineering and speciality materials group, has resigned at the age of 65 after 14 years in the post. A spokeswoman for the company said that Mr Spooner was retiring. He will leave the board on December 31, to be succeeded by Bruce Farmer, who is currently managing director. Ian Norris has been appointed deputy managing director, with a view to succeeding Dr Farmer on January 1. Pre-tax profit in the last full year was £100.2 million (£85 million). The shares closed up 6p at 485½p.

HoF opens £12m store

HOUSE OF FRASER has opened its new department store in the Victoria shopping centre in Nottingham. The new store represents an investment of more than £12 million and forms the key feature of a new extension to the shopping centre. With 81,000 square feet of selling space and some 350 members of staff, the Nottingham store brings the total number of stores owned by House of Fraser to 51 and is the first to have been designed reflecting House of Fraser's re-focused marketing programme.

Hemingway buys sites

HEMINGWAY PROPERTIES has agreed to buy a portfolio of 43 properties from Scottish Life for £44.1 million, to be met by borrowing and from existing cash resources. The portfolio currently produces rental income of £4.1 million, giving a net initial yield of about 9 per cent. The portfolio consists of retail, office and industrial premises in England and Scotland, where Hemingway said that it sees potential for transactions to enhance capital value and rental streams. Hemingway said that prospects for the group during the current financial year continue to be satisfactory. Its shares rose 1p to 41p.

Select in American deal

SELECT Appointments has acquired the business and certain related assets of Aztec Consulting Services for a maximum of $7.2 million (£4.5 million). Aztec, based in New Jersey, provides information technology personnel specialising in programming, software development, systems analysis and testing. The maximum aggregate consideration is $7.2 million. In 1996 Aztec reported profit before tax of $748,956 on sales of $12.2 million. For the first six months of this year Aztec reported profit before tax of $547,982 on sales of $7.1 million.

Sterling puts squeeze on Bernard Matthews profit

BERNARD MATTHEWS, the poultry group, suffered a fall in pre-tax profits to £6.7 million in the six months to July 13, from £10.4 million in the same period last year, in spite of a 7.5 per cent increase in overall sales to £185.3 million (Alistair Pegg writes).

Sales of branded products in the UK rose by more than 10 per cent, while foreign operations increased turnover 14 per cent, largely because of the contribution of Bartsch, the newly acquired German company. The interim dividend is 1.8p per share (1.7p). Earnings per share were 3.49p (5.76p).

The company blamed sterling's strength for squeezing export profit margins and enabling foreign imports to depress domestic turkey meat prices. Higher interest rates, falling commodity meat prices and high cereal prices also had an adverse effect.

Computer games market is predicted to boom

THE European computer games market is set to boom in the next five years, according to a report. Europeans will spend more than £1.5 billion on home computer games software in 2002, says *European Electronic Games 1997-2002*, a new report from Datamonitor, the analyst.

Online games, conducted over networks such as the Internet, will be worth £376 million in 2002, it says. Faster and cleverer personal computers, capable of running more complicated software, and becoming much more popular in people's homes, will be the prime cause of the boom.

By 2002, the report says, 44.5 million European homes will have a multimedia computer. Dedicated games consoles will slowly be superseded by computers, and by better machines that are a hybrid of the two, it forecasts.

ACCOUNTANCY

Taxpayers, watch this space

With the deadline for tax returns looming, **Andrew Meeson** gives an assessment of self-assessment

Self-assessment sounds like such an uncontroversial idea, and if everything goes well it should not be a problem. Three quarters of taxpayers already have the correct tax deducted (either through pay-as-you-earn or from savings) and do not even have to worry about self-assessment. For the remaining eight million or so, the theory is simple — if the Inland Revenue has not sent a tax return, ask for one. Then complete it, work out how much tax is owed, and pay it. So long as the tax return is sent in by September 30 the Revenue will work out the bill for you.

But of course it is not as easy as that — the Revenue cannot be sure that everyone will fill in the returns properly. Some people will make mistakes and a few will try to get away with paying less than they should. Which is why the Revenue is required to make inquiries into returns. Not all returns, of course — it does not have the manpower and it would not be a sensible use of government money. Probably no more than one in 20 returns will be subjected to an inquiry.

There are three objectives behind these inquiries: to ensure that the system is working properly, to encourage people to get things right and to catch and punish cheats. This means that some inquiries (about 8,000 a year) need to be made at random. The random inquiries were selected before the returns were sent out, so there can be no question of unfairness.

The others are picked by what the Revenue calls "risk criteria". In some cases this will mean that, simply by looking at the information contained in the return, the Revenue suspects that something is wrong — a concept which is already familiar to the self-employed since that is the basis on which their accounts have been reviewed by the Revenue. In other cases, it may simply be that your return contains the type of transaction where there is a likelihood of mistakes being made — for example capital gains tax valuations.

If your return is selected, you will be told so in a formal letter, together with a copy of the Revenue's code of practice for inquiries. The Revenue can start an inquiry at any time up to January 31, 1999 (later if you send your return in late). If it does not start an inquiry within that time, it must leave your return alone after that (unless it discovers you left things out, or made false statements in the return).

ROBIN MAYES



Andrew Meeson says the Revenue can make inquiries

The Revenue is committed to keeping these inquiries non-confrontational, as far as possible. Most will be settled by correspondence between the inspector of taxes and you or your adviser, although there may be times when the inspector suggests a meeting. In addition, the inspector may ask you to provide documentary evidence of any entries in your return — for example interest certificates, contract notes, etc.

Do not forget that you are required to hold on to these documents at least until January 1999 (2003 if you are self-employed), and there are fines of up to £3,000 if you do not.

What has worried many people is the possibility that an inquiry might become a costly nightmare, with the inspector asking more and more questions in an attempt to find something wrong with the return. The recent, infamous, "Farthings Steak House" case where an innocent taxpayer was excessively and expensively hounded, was bad publicity that the Revenue is determined will not happen again.

We now have a strong safeguard against Revenue "fishing expeditions" — at any time during the inquiry you can ask the independent appeal commissioners for an order to terminate the inquiry. Unless the inspector can convince the commissioners that he has good reasons for carrying on, he must stop asking questions.

Once the inquiry is over, the inspector must write to you and tell you what, if any, extra tax is due. Within the next two months either you or the Revenue can amend your tax bill, and if you are not happy, the commissioners will adjudicate on the final figure.

That is how it is supposed to work in theory. How this new and untried system will work in practice is a question to which taxpayers, their advisers and, indeed, the Revenue are eagerly awaiting the answer. In a year's time we will know. In the meantime, as they say, "watch this space".

The author is a senior tax manager at Price Waterhouse.

A fudge that could lead to an alliance

THE inevitable has happened. The International Accounting Standards Committee (IASC) has stumbled in the final furlong as it hurtles towards its deadline of next spring for a fully agreed core set of international financial reporting rules. And, as expected, it is the question of accounting for financial instruments that has brought it down. Now, instead of presenting its own very different accounting standard on the topic, it is to simply take on board the existing US rules.

That is exactly what everyone feared would happen when the IASC embarked on its task of finalising a core set of accounting standards that would open up the possibility of an American stock market listing to international companies complying with the IASC rules. Given the interminable time that accounting standards have taken to finalise in the past the timetable the IASC adopted always looked optimistic in the extreme.

The International Organisation of Securities Commissions (IOSCO), which has the final word on whether or not the IASC work is good enough for it to endorse international standards as being adequate for cross-border offerings and listings, may now find its task easier. After all, much of the opposition has come from the Americans and they can hardly argue if the IASC rules start to be lifted simply from the Americans' own rulebook, even if they cover only the measurement of derivatives and accounting for hedging.



ROBERT BRUCE

But it may not be as simple as that. The decision has yet to be taken. The IASC board meets in Paris at the end of October and the proposals come in two stages. The first is that the American standard be adopted "as an interim measure". The second is that the IASC should "join with national standard setters, including the American Financial Accounting Standards Board (FASB), to work to agree a harmonised international standard". Sir Bryan Carsberg, IASC's chief, said: "We are taking an interim step in a special situation. It is the only way we can meet the April deadline."

This to some extent gets everyone off the hook. It had been expected that the American Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC), which provides the toughest hurdle for companies outside the US to gain a listing, would eventually use the lack of completion of the financial instruments standard as an easy way to insist that the IASC's efforts had failed. Now it will not be able to argue that.

The efforts to produce rules that will govern the use of financial instruments have been fraught on both sides of the Atlantic. Those people promulgating rules are in reasonable agreement. It is everyone else who disagrees. In America, there are any number of prospective rules in the process of completion. In the UK, the programme, though vigorous, has some way to go.

This week sees the publication of the latest edition of the monumental and standard work on financial reporting, *UK GAAP*, produced by a team from Ernst & Young. It says: "It is clear that the subject of accounting for financial instruments is likely to remain one of the most difficult regulatory challenges for the next few years. Perhaps unusually, there seems to be a high degree of consensus among the major standard setters — that marking all financial instruments to market can be the only ultimate solution — but this is a controversial view that may meet with considerable resistance."

As an illustration of this it would be hard to better the outrage with which Martin Scicluna, chairman of Deloitte & Touche, greeted the news of the IASC decision. "Is it wise of the IASC to disregard both the opposition in the US and the interests of companies worldwide which do not find the US proposals appropriate to their circumstances?" he said. "Could this be due to excessive pressure from the SEC? Could it be that the SEC is finding more and more resistance in the US to the FASB proposals and is now trying the global route?" And he also alleged that most companies liked financial instruments because they resembled icebergs. "The risks that companies assume in taking on derivatives remain mainly off-balance sheet, under the water," he said.

But the IASC's difficulties could be turned to advantage, which is clearly how Sir Bryan would like to see the situation. Once IOSCO approves the international rules next year there could be an alliance between IASC, FASB and the other standard-setting bodies to renegotiate and build effective rules on financial instruments. What started as a fudge to meet a timetable could turn into a proper global alliance of the bodies that set the rules of financial reporting.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Measured performance

DOWN at the English ICA last week they were wondering whether directors at the Woolwich brought sleeping bags and pyjamas along to board meetings just in case they didn't get home before midnight. The thoughts were prompted by the extraordinary performance of Sir Brian Jenkins, Woolwich chairman and a past president of the institute, in chairing the institute's annual corporate reporting conference. By midday, two hours into the event, it was already an hour behind schedule. And at the appointed hour for lunch, with one speaker and a panel discussion still to come, Jenkins started asking the audience if the next speaker should be shunted onto the afternoon shift. In his inimitable and disarming way he simply said "I've totally lost control". Fortunately for Jenkins one of the afternoon speakers, Will Hutton of *The Observer*, failed to show and the event ended only half an hour late. The title of the conference, "Performance measurement in the digital age", obviously didn't apply to Jenkins's watch.

Wealth of talent

IT IS good to see that the principles of being a good entrepreneur are dinned into them early at Price Waterhouse. Last year the firm created a staff introduction scheme that provides a £3,000 bonus to anyone bringing in a new recruit. Needless to say it is the financial services practice that has done best. Some £30,000 has been paid to staff "for helping us to meet our growth targets in a highly cost-effective way". Thwarted recruitment consultants are believed to be fuming.

No 'hot air' jokes

THIS weekend sees the annual Open House event when London buildings open to the public. And again the star attraction is Chartered Accountants' Hall, HQ of the English ICA. We would suggest trying the famous echo in the council chamber, but it is closed for repairs to the air-conditioning. Jokes about the quality of hot air are wearing thin among staff. But the rest of the building is open from 10am to 1pm on Saturday.

ROBERT BRUCE

Equities regain the high ground

TRADING PERIOD: Settlement takes place five business days after the day of trade. Changes are calculated on *the previous day's close*, but adjustments are made when a stock is ex-dividend. Changes, yields and price/earnings ratios are based on middle prices.

ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES

1997 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
490	402½	Allied Domecq	484½	+½	5%	14.5
626	385	Bulmer (HP)	406	+ 5	4.5	11.3
75¼	40½	Burn Stewart	46½	- 2	9.1	11.6
1640	665	Cairngorm Brew A	976	..	17	24.1
631	425½	Brand Mktg	569½	+ 2½	22	18.8
627	424	Edinburgh	572	+ 10	35	16.3
380	233	Highland Distl	296½	+ 1½	35	13.9
338	213	Matthew Clark	230	+ 6	13.0	6.9
109½	52½	Minches Wt	60½	..	6.4	14.9
2609½	1462½	SA Breweries	1771½	..	2.2	

BANKS

1521½	918½	ABN-AMRO	1262½	+ 40½	2.6	17.4
971	532½	Abbey Natl	896	..	3.9	14.5
999½	532½	Alliance & Leic	698½	- 1	3.1	15.5
562	388½	Allied Irish	527½	+ 2½	3.5	15.0
488½	363½	Anglo Irish 2	477	+ 8½	4.0	
46714	2675	Bank America	4637½	+ 43½	..	
458	291½	Bank Scotland	452	+ 3½	2.3	13.7
1505	978½	Barclays†	1492½	+ 5	2.8	14.2
764	512½	Bk of Ireland	726½	+ 9	3.7	16.0
9838½	9006½	Citicorp	9393½	+119½	..	
1759½	1268½	Consolidated	1712½	+ 9½	2.8	..
882½	556½	Dai Ichi Kan Y	678½	- 16½	0.7	..
4321½	2708½	Deutsche Bk	3865½	+ 87½	1.8	..
1200	758½	Espirito Santo	1078½	- 6½	2.9	..
947½	584½	Fuji Bank Y	701½	- 4½	0.8	..
2369½	1272½	HSBC†	1958½	+ 16	3.8	15.9
2258½	1241	HSBC HK†	1879	+ 14½	3.1	15.2
1764½	1164½	Wells Fargo	1764½	..	2.0	20.0
397½	315½	Westpac	372½	- ½	4.0	..
373½	284	Woolwich†	317½	+ ½	3.1	18.8

BREWERIES, PUBS & REST

878½	717½	Bass	844	+ ½	3.8	15.8
66½	43½	Bk for the Bdry	54½	..	4.7	11.5
265	142½	Burtonwood Bew	152½	..	4.9	14.2
1559½	1215	City Centre Rest	144	..	2.2	22.4
744½	575½	Compass Gp	623	+ 22½	1.8	22.9
305	250	Elbridge P 'A'	281½	- 2	2.5	15.9
757½	521	Enterprise Inns	756½	+ ½	4.1	18.0
485	412	Fuller Sm 'A'	417½	..	3.0	14.5
586	502½	Greenalls Grp	564	+ ½	4.4	11.3
770	642	Greene King	716	..	2.9	15.4
177½	152½	Grosvenor Inns	155	..	..	53
285	218½	Gringe Chnl Ser	273½	..	3.9	12.3
2889½	2511	Hardy Haron	2644	- 1	3.2	17.7
26860	2673	Holt J	2673	..	2.8	15.8
78	63	Inn Reversect	65	..	3.1	10.5
357	307	Mansfield	329	..	2.7	14.3
3165½	2552	Minston Thrng	2939½	..	3.4	10.2
615	505½	Mitchells	562½	..	3.2	12.8
2668½	2110	Old Eng Pub	2525½	..	1.0	32.3
47½	18½	Paramount	22½	..	..	..
830½	527½	PizzaExpress	724	+ 3½	0.5	47.2
437½	335½	Ramsdens (H)	360	..	1.7	31.9
378½	242½	Regent Inns	330½	+ 1	1.0	31.6
130	100½	SFI	125½	..	1.2	12.7
768½	627	Scot & Newc	738½	+ 1	3.6	14.5
305	248½	Vaux Group	274	- ½	4.9	12.3
1524	1103	Wetherspoon JD)	1522½	..	..	..
863	738½	Whitbread	1000½	+ 1½	1.7	14.7
705½	554	Wolverhmpn D	560	+ 2½	3.9	12.2
377	279½	Yates Bros	368½	- 1½	1.0	29.5
702½	615	Young 'A'	697½	..	2.7	27.4

BUILDING & CONSTRUCT

32½	15½	AAF Inds	19	..	..	..
205	170	Ashtenden	205	..	3.7	..
3559½	2372	Allen	3559½	..	2.6	21.5
1869½	1605½	Amec	1691½	+ 3½	3.6	..
512	347½	Amey†	427	+ 3	2.9	15.6
665	485	Andrews Sykes	602½	- 7½	2.1	17.8
324½	222½	Ashtenutt	301½	+ 12	1.5	20.8
68½	29½	Ayscough	42	..	4.5	8.7
39½	24½	Bandt	37½	..	4.7	25.8
64½	49½	Barcon	59	..	2.8	18.1
291½	236	Barratt Devs	265½	+ 5	4.1	14.8
210	154½	Bezier	178½	+ 1½	4.3	13.8
381½	298½	Bellway	362½	..	2.9	16.2
22½	16½	Bellhouse	17	- ½	..	11.2
32½	20	Bett Bailey†	45	..	4.4	6.8
768½	606	Berkeley Gp	741	+ 4½	1.6	15.4
172	142	Bett Bros	146½	..	4.9	9.0
352	238	Bost (Henry)	266	..	2.8	14.3
1209½	874	Brandon Hire	1209½	..	3.0	16.0
37½	25½	Bristnor Grp	35	..	3.3	6.6
72½	42½	Br Bldg & Eng	72½	..	..	..
159	120½	Bryant	124	+ ½	5.2	12.9
1254½	999	CALA	1075½	..	..	..
6½	2½	Campbell & Arn	5	..	..	..
67½	55½	Clarke T	61½	..	8.1	9.6
46	46	Costain†	46	..	..	..
105	71	Countryside	94	..	3.3	14.5
708½	604½	Crest Nicholson†	705	..	3.8	12.9
152½	87½	Cussons	92	+ ½	3.6	10.7
177½	147½	Eve Group†	164	..	5.8	10.4
214	159	Galliford	21	..	6.0	23.0
932½	857½	Gleeson (MJ)	917½	..	2.2	15.6
320	272½	Hawtock Exm	280	..	2.1	18.0
187½	123	Hemdon-Stuart	167	+ ½	2.4	37.2
21½	19½	Horsend Hdgs	19	..	5.6	10.7
318	130½	Jones	267½	..	1.9	21.9
272½	182½	Kellett	212½	..	2.8	14.7
250½	198½	Ker	206½	..	3.9	12.3
380½	279	Laing (J)	379	+ 1	3.3	31.8
138½	110½	Laing (John) 8.4% Cr Pf	127½	+ 1	6.4	....
14½	9	Lovell (TJ)	11½	..	..	..
218½	162½	Maunders (J)	185½	..	3.9	13.6
167½	112½	McAlpine (A)	139	..	6.3	69.8
136½	95½	McCarthy & S	135	..	2.2	16.1
75	53½	McInerney	65	..	..	..
235½	156½	Morgan Sindall†	175½	..	3.2	11.9
306½	234½	Morrison Const	297½	..	2.2	18.8
164	109	Mowlem (J)	109	- ½	4.1	18.5
266	208	Pennmount	232	+ 1½	5.2	11.7
102½	48	Persimmon†	1003½	- 2	4.9	22.1
153	100	Pochins	100	..	3.1	10.4
144½	97½	Prowting	112	- 2½	4.5	18.4
179½	145½	Redrow	171	- 2	2.7	14.8
340	255	Sheriff Hdgs	340	+ 13	2.7	29.2
3822½	2661	Spandex	2651	- 2½	1.5	13.5
103	76	Swan Hill	87½	..	3.6	..
153½	115	Tay Homes	145½	..	6.1	31.5
215	153	Taylor Woodrw	183½	- 2½	2.6	14.0
767½	515½	Tilbury Dougls	567½	..	4.9	15.2
27½	19½	Try Group	23½	+ ½	..	11.4
88	58	Wagonlord†	71	..	..	7.1
152½	112	Washtenos	140½	..	4.2	19.8
74½	36½	Ward Hidgs†	51½	- 1	..	..
271	224½	Westbury	255	- 1½	3.3	14.7
69½	45½	Wates Yeung Gre	62½	+ 2	6.0	19.7
12	7½	Wiggins	9½	..	..	..
191	147½	Wilcon (C)	165½	- ½	3.8	16.6
563½	471½	Wilson Bowdn	557	- 3½	2.6	14.5
155	120	Wimpey G	125	- ½	5.6	13.1

BUILDING MATERIALS

56	33	Aggregate Indst	53½	..	4.7	23.9
388	296½	BPB	357½	+ 4½	3.6	15.8
110½	91½	Baggeridge Brk	98½	..	4.0	24.5
1170	977½	Blockleys	1150	..	..	..
452	361	Blue Circle†	383	- 6	4.0	13.1
981½	789½	Brandon PLC	825½	..	7.3	12.7
152½	119	Br Dredging	148½	..	3.9	12.6
782½	582½	CRH	670	- 3½	1.5	16.5
49½	36½	Caledonian Bldg	44½	..	9.0	4.3
192½	162½	Cape	164½	..	4.6	..
273	187	Cladon	192	+ ½	6.3	9.3
133½	102	Cuadon of	104	..	8.7	..
89½	60	Caston Eqt	70	..	8.3	6.7
272½	212½	Dyson (JB.J)	245	..	2.9	14.2
145	132	Dyson 'A'	141	..	5.1	8.2
4	2½	Eurobrick	3	- ½	..	..
290	215	Epwell	218½	..	5.3	13.3
101½	63½	Gibbs & Dandrf	81½	..	5.3	9.8
148½	119	Gleeson Grp	141½	- 4	5.2	20.1
365½	187½	Halstead (J)	205	..	5.8	9.4
334½	271½	Hawtin	305½	+ 3½	3.0	12.1
287½	206½	Hepworth	263½	..	2.8	16.2
108½	77½	Hewetson†	85	..	6.6	8.9
268	190½	Heyed Wms†	211	+ 1	6.2	8.7
52½	36½	Hollick	50	..	4.2	31.8
538	316	Johnston	395	..	8.3	9.4
82½	62½	Lafarge	75	..	6.4	10.9
137	110	Marley†	112	+ ½	5.7	10.9
180½	119½	Marshalls†	140½	..	4.6	21.4
457½	361½	Meyer Int	426	..	5.6	18.8
95½	69½	Moncrieff	83	..	3.6	17.0
198	110	Pilkington	156½	+ 9	4.0	18.5
264½	184½	Polypipe	218½	+ 2	1.9	16.2
1147½	878½	RMC Gp	1054	+ 8	3.1	15.5
381½	262½	Redland	286	+ 1	4.2	15.8
139½	66	Rocket	135½	..	4.5	9.5
1147½	875	Ruberoid	845	..	7.8	21.4
237½	191½	Rugby Group	117	..	3.2	28.4
113	92½	Russell (A)	106½	- 2½	3.5	16.0
346½	241½	SIG	311½	- 4	2.7	16.1
34	17½	SWP	34	..	..	..
252½	211½	Sharpe & Fisher	235	..	3.3	14.8
30½	9½	Spring Ram	11	..	..	..
187½	158½	Staveley Inds	165½	..	5.6	11.8
131½	98½	Tarmac	123½	..	3.6	10.4
145	100	Titon	110	..	5.8	..
545	436½	Travis Perkins	530½	- 2	2.5	18.2
60½	34½	Tudor	55	..	3.2	16.7
514	422½	Wellstrata	499½	+ 3	2.6	16.5

CHEMICALS

172½	142	Allnright & Wil	167½	+ ½	5.1	12.4
137	106½	Allied Colloids	119½	+ 2½	3.3	17.7
135	115	Amber Ind	116	..	6.2	10.6
109½	91½	Amberley Grf	106½	+ 3	1.9	18.6
3	0½	Anglo Dld	1½	..	..	6.0
3531½	2112½	BASF Dld	2193½	- 6½	2.7	....
1195	854½	BOC	1076½	- 1	3.3	18.4
234	248	BTP	348	+ 5	4.6	15.7
2859½	2346½	Bayer DM50	2371½	+ 18½	2.5	..
112½	68½	Brent Chems	78½	..	4.3	9.3
252½	185½	Br Vita	243½	+ ½	4.4	12.9
192½	132½	Bluemer Mowt	155	..	7.3	..
315½	256½	Cammeg (W)	261	+ 1	4.1	12.9
222½	149½	City Technology	202½	+ 6	3.3	..
402½	286	Courtaulds	325	+ 17	6.3	15.7
380	246	Crodal	379½	+ 7	4.3	10.0
305½	204½	Deeflex	255	..	4.4	12.7
330½	238½	Elks & Everard†	265	..	4.8	11.2
72	49½	Euro Colour	63	..	7.3	10.8
123½	81½	Gibbons	119½	..	..	14.1
92½	52	Hickson	73½	- 1	..	..
2918½	2316½	Hoechst	2637½	+ 75	1.9	....
186	118½	Holliday Chems†	180½	..	3.6	35.5
1118	681½	ICI†	1054½	+ 17½	3.8	13.5
231½	163½	Inspec†	227½	..	4.0	25.7
180½	119	Ivanhoe	171½	..	4.0	14.5
749½	562½	Lonzoke	731	+ 7½	4.0	14.7
192	115	Marsden	145½	+ 5½	9.8	18.3
91	39	Mortclem	50	..	5.4	8.1
36	22	Metrotect	33	..	4.2	27.6
330	240	Norcart	325½	..	3.2	12.8
246	174½	Scapa	239½	..	6.9	9.6
29	16	Safe-Safe Speak	17½	- 4½	0.4	26.6
1350½	1135½	Tatmills Chem	1245½	..	5.2	13.4
690	556	Wilsonlohmr R	615	..	5.2	..
243	156	Yates Grp	199	..	5.9	..
361½	302½	Yule Catto	331½	..	3.4	14.6

DISTRIBUTORS

202½	149½	Acken Cp Spls	178½	+ ½	0.7	20.5
398	275	Adam & Harvey	387½	..	7.0	12.5
21½	9½	Alexanders	10½	..	2.6	11.2
90	51½	Applegarth	66	..	..	6.0
39	14½	Ass Br Eng	2	..	..	..
540	486	BSS Group	530	..	4.3	19.5
18½	13½	Bocaqy Power	16	..	..	..
39½	34½	Bogod 'A'	37½	..	3.0	7.4
688	530	Bunzl†	662½	+ ½	3.4	15.6
27	17½	Bridgend Gp	17½	..	5.0	8.9
119½	99½	Bril Fittings	113½	..	5.9	..
360	300	Caltyes	335	..	4.7	11.3

DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIALS

492½	327½	Amalgamts	400	..	1.5	21.1
328	232	Ascot Hldgs	297½	+ 1	2.7	39.6
917	724½	Bowman Hdl	752½	+ 4	1.5	..
289	180½	BTR	239	+ 1½	4.7	8.2
601½	462	BAT†	518½	- 1	6.3	11.7
69½	49½	Barclay Inv	52½	+ 1½	9.1	8.6
266	162	Bookham	254½	+ 2	4.4	14.2
259½	197½	Cookson	215½	..	6.0	9.3
482½	355½	DCC	381½	- 6	2.3	14.3
317½	243½	Gallaher	273	+ 4	9.1	9.2
147½	95½	Glenpeon Hldg	132	..	3.7	11.5
1480½	1019½	Hanson Cr'dit	1155	..	3.8	15.1
667½	479½	Hutch Whamp	570½	- 2½	2.1	19.7
438½	362	Imperial Tob	375½	- 6½	6.7	7.5
645	493	Jardine Math	522½	+ 1½	3.0	12.8
414	327½	Jardine Strat	327½	..	3.0	13.3
208½	126½	Bunzley	208	..	4.0	17.4
1482½	1180½	Rentokil Initial	1481	..	2.3	18.2
397½	327½	TT Group	374½	+ 9	2.7	15.2
336½	252½	Tomkinsn	326½	+ ½	3.8	14.6
210	165	Unidare	202½	..	8.0	10.5
438	369½	Wardle Sweys	370	..	6.6	13.8
387½	295½	Wassall	327	+ 3½	2.6	14.5
166½	122½	Whitecroft	124	+ ½	5.0	10.0
376½	294½	Williams	354½	+ 1½	5.1	15.5

ELECTRICITY

314½	184½	Bk Energy	306	+ ½	5.5	59.5
665	463½	Energy Group	643	+ 2½	4.1	11.7
2844½	192	National Power	2812	+ 5½	5.0	11.6
5380½	4601½	National Power	5021	- 29½	5.7	10.6
460	352½	Nthrn Ireland†	458	+ 9½	4.7	12.1
797½	565½	PowerGen	755	- 22	4.2	12.2
460½	319½	Hydro-Elect†	437½	- 2	5.0	10.4
474½	331½	Scottish Power†	450	+ 1	5.1	11.8
472½	373½	Southern Elect	456	- 6	5.3	12.5

ELECTRONIC & ELECT

493½	361½	Acal	382½	..	3.1	12.8
2469½	1495	Acorn	150	..	..	..
240½	178½	Admiralt	195	+ 2½	0.6	37.3
48½	33½	Aden	39½	..	4.3	9.2
164½	118	Adec	127½	..	1.8	14.9
626	505	Aden#	595	..	0.9	17.1
2553½	1399½	BICC	149	- 1	10.8	13.4
173	91	Beales Hesterl	87½	..	15.5	21.2
78	22	Beacon	41½	- 2½	0.6	19.6
382½	265	Blick	307½	..	8.4	6.1
457½	292½	Bowthorpe	368½	+ 17½	3.6	14.5
9	5	Bulgin A	13	+ ½	7.4	15.5
1577½	1277½	CML Micro	1352½	- 7½	5.6	11.3
394½	322½	Chemrad Hdgs	349½	- ½	6.0	11.9
43½	27½	Chlorde	35½	- ½	2.2	9.9
84½	54	Clayhithe	70½	..	6.1	8.0
920	537½	Critchley	892½	- 10	2.4	18.3
783	617½	Data Sc Sys	745½	+ 7½	1.0	29.0
388½	257½	Data	317½	+ 3½	6.0	11.5
367½	255	Domino	312	..	4.6	13.6
1008	720	Dowding Mills	711½	+ 1	5.7	..
306	220	Dwedr	265	..	0.8	28.1
5071½	3316½	Electronic 'B'	4821½	+ 46½	2.1	23.5
2½	2½	Elect	2½	..	2.4	13.7
2821½	1771½	Ericsson 'B'	2764½	+ 31½	0.7	..
76½	27½	Eurocopy	32	..	10.5	4.9
541	305	Exotherm	388	+ 18½	3.0	15.6
645	453	Farey Group	470	+ 12½	1.9	17.4
447½	291½	Filtronic Comm	433½	+ 3½	0.4	66.8
32	19½	Fonvard Tech	29	..	7.8	..
414	327½	GEC†	385	- ½	4.3	20.8
208½	126½	Gamsby	208	..	4.0	17.4
1482½	1180½	Gresh Cntrol	1481	..	2.3	18.2
249½	202	Oxford Instr	402½	+ 6	2.3	13.0
237½	41½	Pace Micro	47	..	1.1	10.4
98	29½	Pace	33½	..	10.1	10.4
5768½	3236½	Phillips Lmp nv	4706½	+ 78½	1.1	..
185½	142½	Pharmac	159½	..	5.1	9.3
238½	33½	Pharmon	42½	..	4.6	4.1
266	208½	Pressac	265½	..	2.0	20.1
48	31	Prosheick	38	..	2.6	8.9
512½	376	Psion†	421½	- 7	0.7	34.8
301½	215	Racal Elect	246	+ 6½	3.1	29.5
136½	99½	Redornac	108	- 2½	3.4	17.6
380	258	Redstone	305½	..	3.1	14.1
3½	1½	Redfone	3	..	..	..
218½	149½	Rodono	202½	+ 3	4.2	12.4
233½	166½	SDX Bus Sys	183	..	1.5	23.9
411½	305	Sarwonex	393	..	3.4	17.8
85½	57½	Sharpenstreet	83½	..	3.0	15.8
54500	35714	TDK	51184	+ 21½	0.5	..
108	66½	TLG	76	..	5.8	8.1
125½	91	TLG	106½	..	5.0	13.3
34½	7	Tadpole Tech	10½	+ ½	..	..
72½	49½	Telemetrik	68	+ ½	2.7	29.4
307½	175	Tetapac	242½	- 5	..	..
157½	125½	Thorpe Fw	134½	..	3.9	11.3
72½	57½	Total Systems	61½	..	2.5	22.3
297	78	Tunstall	71	+ 1	0.1	4.9
57½	36½	Vinth	54½	+ ½	0.2	..
195½	83½	Vtech	97	+ 2	7.5	7.6
68½	60	Vigilon Technology	62	..	..	..
465	400	Volex	445	..	5.9	13.0
45½	10½	Watsonwire#	10½	..	..	..

ENGINEERING

562½	370	AMP	460	..	2.4	15.0
378	228	Alumasc	292½	+ 3½	3.7	..
149	107	Aliss	134	..	3.0	24.0
2062½	1397	Ash & Lacy	1711½	..	3.4	16.1
8172½	5525	Atlas Equip	915	..	3.4	16.7
1159½	95½	Aperture Mdsl	102½	..	6.3	5.6
4365½	374	BBA†	436½	+ 10	2.0	27.9
125½	79½	BHP	92	..	10.2	6.8
93	54½	Beacock	91½	+ ½	1.6	7.6
119	7½	Bailey (C H)	8½	..	..	..
132½	76	Baynes (Charles)	96½	..	3.8	11.5
44½	29½	Beadlam	30	..	3.1	10.6
63½	37½	Benson Group	43½	..	3.7	13.2
152½	124	Boustead Hld	151½	+ ½	4.1	21.2
969½	680	Bodycote	933½	+ 5½	1.1	17.5
49½	37½	Booth Inds	45½	..	..	..
29½	18	Brassmyl	18	- 2½	6.2	6.8
1414½	1011½	Brooke Tool	1289½	+ 10½	3.5	8.8
52½	11½	Brunel	14½	..	7.1	17.3
1257½	1027½	Bullough	995	..	6.1	10.3
35	22	Carbo	26½	..	6.1	12.9
2086½	1274½	Carclo Eng	1985½	..	2.3	13.0
2997½	2144½	Cookson	2175½	..	3.9	13.2
1370	1160	Chamberlin Hll	1160	..	6.3	8.6
856½	715	Chantair†	835	+ 21½	4.2	12.3
266	76½	Cleaning	135	..	9.0	15.1
380	278	Clyde Blowers	289½	..	3.5	25.7
806½	551½	Coblenz	788½	- ½	1.8	24.2
485	286	Cohen (A)	388½	..	..	..
185	108½	Concentric	130	..	6.8	11.7
230	189	David Brown	197½	..	5.3	11.3
386	337	Dis	376½	..	6.1	9.6
24½	8½	Disco	18½	..	1.7	..
82½	57½	Diloit (D)	73½	..	3.1	21.2
119½	96½	Expamet	114½	+ 4	3.9	12.7
297	140	FKI	194	+ 2	3.4	21.0
178	145½	Fenner	175	+ 6½	2.9	22.5
7½	1½	Ferrum	2	..	..	22.7
624	30½	Firth Hidgs†	38½	..	1.0	14.2
102½	86	Firth Rixson	101	..	2.2	12.8
150½	110½	Flare	112	..	5.3	10.8
170	92	GEI Int	105½	..	5.3	10.6
183½	136½	Garton Eng	165	- 1½	6.2	5.8
335	193½	Gleyeed	272½	+ 19	5.9	11.3
140½	95	Gonyalson	99	..	28.6	2.8
134½	104	Hadon Medin	108	..	3.1	12.8
345	180	Hardsight	183	..	4.2	8.7
249	188	Hall Engr	216	..	4.6	9.1
149½	105½	Haleno	127½	- 1	2.3	18.2
74½	54½	Hampson Ind	65½	..	3.7	14.1
47½	24½	Hay (Norman)	37½	..	..	16.9
45½	28½	Headway	34½	..	..	..
89½	54½	Hill & Smith†	84½	- 1	13.2	10.0
69½	52½	Hiltons	53½	- ½	4.3	10.2
201	159½	Huntleg	201	+ 1	5.7	13.1
498½	278	IMI	409½	+ 16	3.8	14.7
664½	460	Johnson Matth	630	..	2.6	17.5
43½	27½	Jones Stephen	30½	..	7.7	13.7
475	388	Kenny Ind	428	..	3.4	13.8
317½	202½	Linrod	305½	..	4.1	14.5
43½	30½	Locker (J)	40½	- ½	3.1	15.3
52½	38½	Mk Hdgs†	51	+ ½	3.9	..
24½	16½	MS Int	23	..	3.3	..
537½	417½	Meng Brwsr	507½	..	2.0	14.8
624	361½	McKechnie	442½	+ 14	3.4	10.7
140	101½	Meggitt	140½	..	3.9	18.5
105	80½	Melrose	97½	..	2.1	40.0
197	158	Metalrax	180	..	4.2	11.8
169	119½	Mitchell	126½	..	4.2	7.4
370	260	Molins†	430	+ 36	6.4	17.5
5075	4004½	Morgan Chr	4875½	+ 6	3.9	15.8
3077½	2322½	Morris Ashby†	3077½	+ 10	3.5	13.7
41½	28	Neepsend†	28½	..	8.8	5.8
285	187½	Nth Sea Int	207	..	0.6	13.4
745

THE TIMES UNIT TRUST INFORMATION SERVICE

AIB GOVETT UNIT TRUST LTD
0171 378 7979 Dealing: 0171 497 7888

Protected Funds

	Sell	Buy	+/-	Yld %
UK Safeguard	138.59	147.88†	+ 0.76	-
Do RAV to Jan 20	129.82	129.82	..	-
UK Equity Safeguard	108.46	115.93	+ 1.60	2.47
Do RAV to Sep 19	101.73	101.73	..	-
Cash	955.96	960.74‡	..	5.75
UK Growth Funds				
UK Equity Cap	356.80	378.70†	..	1.74
British Growth	82.34	88.06	+ 1.60	1.43
UK Smalls Cos	76.17	81.46†	+ 0.20	0.49
FTSE 250 Index	98.21	102.88	+ 0.60	2.11
General UK Index	2255.75	2381.36†	+60.00	5.25
Income Funds				
UK Equity Inc #	111.20	118.92†	+ 1.90	4.24
Corp Bd	79.21	81.83	+ 0.61	-
Monthly Inc	42.45	45.24‡	+ 0.42	8.47
International Funds				
American Gen	306.90	324.70	+ 8.20	-
American Strat	278.29	296.70	+ 2.50	-
35 US Index	2348.21	2474.74‡	+30.00	4.60
European Gen	323.50	352.60†	+ 8.60	0.64
European Strat	147.11	157.33	+ 3.70	-
Japan Gen	130.90	138.50	+ 1.10	-
Japan Strat	45.62	47.52	- 0.20	-
Asia Pacific	92.27	98.67	- 0.11	-
Pacific Strat	154.67	165.42	- 3.30	-
Gender Chins	314.16	336.00	- 0.10	-
Latin America	321.53	343.80	- 0.10	-
Int Growth	183.47	196.22	+ 1.90	-
Balanced Exempt	152.90	158.40	..	2.26
Global Strategy	51.97	55.58	- 0.27	-

AXA EQUITY & LAW UNIT TST MGRS
01203 953 231

General Acc	824.60	877.30	+ 16.10	2.24
General Inc	672.10	715.00	- 13.10	2.24
UK Growth Acc	570.60	607.10	+ 11.00	2.11
UK Growth Inc	364.50	388.20	+ 7.10	2.11
Higher Inc Acc #	1012.70	1077.40	+ 15.10	4.42
Higher Inc Inc #	531.20	565.20	+ 7.90	4.42
Cstc/Fxd Int Acc	227.20	239.90	- 0.90	5.39
Gilt/Fxd Int Inc	94.81	99.92	- 0.35	5.39
North America	447.60	476.70	+ 8.20	-
Europe	453.70	482.70	+ 7.20	0.03
Pref Equity	114.00	121.30	+ 2.20	2.25
Pref Fndmtls Acc	138.60	147.70	+ 1.50	4.28
Pref Fndmtls Inc	89.10	94.79	+ 1.00	4.29
Global Opps	117.70	125.30	+ 0.90	-
Balanced Acc	74.62	79.39	+ 0.65	2.19
Balanced Inc	68.66	73.07	+ 0.75	2.10
International	155.30	165.20	+ 1.20	0.53
Dividend & Growth	79.64	84.72	+ 1.52	4.12
Global Opps & Sec	77.56	82.51	+ 0.32	2.44
Latin America	97.10	103.30†	+ 1.10	0.65
Capital Reserve	154.60	151.70	+ 0.60	4.61

ABBEY NATIONAL UNIT TRUST MGRS LTD
0141 275 6500

M&P UK Growth	109.80	116.60	+ 2.10	1.03
Equity Income #	152.00	161.70†	+ 2.40	2.73
Extra Income #	200.30	208.80†	+ 1.60	3.66
Smaller Cos	104.50	111.10†	..	2.91
International	133.40	141.90	+ 1.80	1.25
Aberdeen Growth	81.16	84.38	+ 2.22	-
Emerging Mkts	77.36	80.58	- 0.13	-
European	176.04	183.11	+ 2.34	-
Extra Income #	55.18	58.06†	+ 0.70	5.36
Far East Exp Eqty	117.44	118.88	- 0.97	0.58
Fixed Interest #	21.18	22.36†	+ 0.01	6.29
Fund Inv Tst #	166.66	174.97	- 0.69	9.74
Japan	168.31	174.76†	- 1.54	-
Latin American	79.91	85.84†	+ 0.56	-
Pacific	75.10	78.94	- 0.29	0.26
Property	85.00	89.24	+ 0.54	1.63
UK Emerging Cos	68.56	74.08	..	0.69
UK Growth	68.58	69.76	+ 1.23	1.45
Wrld Wide Port #	92.27	97.12	+ 1.06	2.60
Ethical	81.27	87.84	+ 0.63	1.71
Aberdeen Gilt Inc #	50.60	50.60†	- 0.13	6.68

ABERFORTH UNIT TRUST MGRS LTD
0131 220 0733

UK Smalls Cos	2446.00	2552.00	..	-

AIRWAYS UNIT TRUST MGRS LTD
0171 256 5868

Recpt Property #	109.20	116.10	..	4.89

ALLCHURCHES MW MGMT SYS LTD
01452 305 958

Arnly Income	104.42	110.79‡	+ 0.16	1.89
Income Builder Inc	93.79	99.78	+ 1.26	3.52

For Old Dunbar see Threadneedle

B & C E UNIT TRUST MGMT LTD
01253 505 911

Dstrbtd Dist Perfc	136.70	142.00	+ 2.60	-
Founder Perf Perfc	89.42	93.56	+ 0.72	-

BAILLIE GIFFORD & CO LTD
0131 222 4242

Americal	468.40	498.30†	+ 4.30	-
Bond	124.59	130.80	..	6.43
Brit Smlr Cos	114.78	122.00	+ 0.42	1.89
Europe	369.42	392.60	+ 8.10	-
Exec Sustr Cos	134.89	143.90	+ 0.62	0.31
High Income #	67.85	72.10‡	+ 0.65	5.39
Income	403.20	428.90†	+ 2.70	3.56
Japan	308.80	327.20	- 1.70	-
Latin American	120.20	127.90	+ 1.60	-
Pacific	117.60	125.10	+ 0.30	0.52
UK Smlr Cos	62.16	66.15	+ 0.19	1.29
Japan Fd	558.10	576.20	+ 4.30	-
Unpd Fd	244.00	259.20	+ 2.50	2.41

BANK OF IRELAND FUND MGRS LTD
0171 489 8673

Bal & Otsec	439.10	464.40	..	0.76
Capital Gwth	158.10	167.20	..	2.50
Wrwide Oppc	248.30	262.70	..	0.83

BARCLAYS UNICORN LTD
0181 542 4000

Balanced Trust:				
Gwth & Inc Inc	514.10	546.90	+ 11.70	5.53
Managed Bd Inc	89.26	102.60	+ 0.49	5.94
Exempt	102.40	109.00	+ 2.50	2.11
500	506.80	544.90‡	+ 2.90	2
General	390.60	415.50†	+ 4.10	1.86
Property	263.20	282.40	..	5.69
Trustee	277.20	294.80	+ 6.10	1.61
Income Trusts				
Cash Inc	101.10	101.10	..	6.38
Distribution #	125.40	126.60†	+ 1.70	5.16
Extra Income #	167.50	178.70	+ 3.60	4.20
Gilt & Fxd Int	82.05	83.97‡	+ 0.65	7.29
Income #	630.50	736.50	+13.40	4.13
Income Builder #	78.96	84.09‡	+ 1.44	4.75
Intl Income	85.94	91.42	+ 1.75	1.37
Growth Trusts - UK				
Capital	174.10	185.30†	+ 4.20	1.44
FTSE 100	128.30	136.20	+ 3.50	1.80
Smlr Cos Inc	59.47	63.43‡	+ 0.10	2.21
UK Growth	499.70	534.30	+11.40	1.64
Growth Trusts - Overseas				
Americas	236.40	250.50	+ 6.60	0.11
F East Gwth Acc	381.40	398.40	+ 1.90	0.33
Far East Gwth	156.70	177.30	- 1.10	0.33
Euro Gwth Inc	337.60	361.20†	+ 5.00	0.36
-do- Accum	358.90	375.10	+ 5.50	0.36
Japan	119.80	124.70	- 1.60	-
-do- Accum	118.20	125.60	- 1.60	-
Japan Spec Sits	84.96	88.57	- 0.86	-
Worldwide	225.70	239.60	+ 3.30	0.56

BARING FUND MANAGERS LTD
0171 214 1004

American Growth	181.00	191.10	+ 5.00	-
Amer Smlr Cos	187.70	199.20	+ 1.40	-
Eastern	272.70	292.70	+ 1.20	0.30
Equity Income #	119.80	127.80	+ 1.50	4.00
European Growth	480.80	510.50	+ 7.40	0.80
Europe	451.20	481.30	+ 2.10	0.80
German Growth	110.40	117.30	+ 1.50	0.50
Global Bond	74.01	77.86	+ 0.45	4.60
Global Growth	175.30	185.70	+ 0.80	0.40
Japan Growth	153.30	162.90	- 3.40	-
Japan Smaller	105.60	111.70	- 1.20	-
Korea Trust	50.44	54.98	- 0.10	-
Pacific Basin	172.10	183.20†	+ 2.70	2.00
-do- Accum	332.30	353.60	+ 5.10	2.00
UK Growth	127.50	136.50	+ 2.50	3.00
UK Smaller Cos	113.40	123.00	+ 0.60	1.90
Select Managers	98.97	105.30	+ 0.90	1.60

BLACKSTONE FRANKS UT MGRS LTD
0171 250 3000

Intl Gwth Port Inc	106.10	112.90	..	-
Special Opps Inc	75.13	79.93‡	..	-

BRITANNIA FUND MGRS LTD
0141 223 6020

Balanced Growth	176.88	184.26	+ 1.32	1.10
-do- Accum	207.00	215.63	+ 1.54	1.10
Smaller Cos	175.78	183.10	+ 0.19	0.38
Higher Yield #	67.84	70.67	+ 1.44	3.74
American Gth Inc	138.88	144.67†	+ 1.86	-
European Growth	202.90	211.43‡	+ 1.73	-
-do- Accum	207.32	215.96	+ 1.76	-
Mngd Portfolio Inc	63.77	66.43‡	+ 0.71	1.27
-do- Accum	66.63	69.61	+ 0.77	1.27
Int Spec Opps	212.07	220.90	- 0.05	-
Pacific Gth Inc	171.25	178.39	+ 0.66	-
UK General #	120.59	125.61	+ 2.56	2.83
-do- Accum #	132.80	138.34	+ 2.82	2.83
Japan	48.51	50.53	- 0.54	-
Gilt & Fixed Int #	106.42	110.28†	+ 1.40	7.61

BURRAGE UNIT TST MGMT LTD
0171 480 7215

Short Dated Gilt	86.04	86.89	+ 0.35	6.25

CIS UNIT MANAGERS LTD
0161 837 3000

Growth	207.70	218.70	+ 2.80	1.53
UK Growth	250.40	277.00†	+ 3.60	1.64
UK Income	179.20	188.60	+ 3.70	3.70

CANADA LIFE MGMT (UK) LTD
01707 632 100

Can Gen Dist	273.90	290.30	+ 4.50	1.36
-do- Income Dist	151.50	160.60	+ 2.60	3.11
-do- Accum	524.20	534.40	+ 8.60	3.11
Gilt & Fxd Int	42.55	44.71‡	+ 0.29	6.08
Growth Units	315.60	337.60†	+ 5.90	1.73
Bond	180.60	193.10†	+ 1.60	6.10
Intl Growth	264.20	270.50	+ 2.00	0.17
North American	329.70	345.10	+ 6.20	-
Far East	271.80	290.70	+ 2.30	0.67
UK Smaller Cos	245.30	262.30	+ 0.10	1.09
European	118.90	124.30	+ 1.80	0.41
Japanese Growth	36.73	38.92	- 0.46	-
High Income	282.00	279.90†	+ 4.50	3.63

CAPEL-CURE MYERS UT MGMT LTD
0161 831 7433 Enq 0161 831 7433 Dlg 0161 831 7465

American & Gen	290.26	306.90†	+ 5.50	-
European Inc	121.90	129.50†	+ 2.00	0.10
Smaller Cos (4-1)	108.80	117.00†	+ 0.60	1.76
Growth	653.60	695.40†	+ 5.20	1.86
Income & Growth #	563.30	598.70	+ 9.70	4.35
-do- Accum #	864.30	919.50	+15.10	4.35
Japan & Gen	57.95	61.40	- 0.64	-
Helmsort Gwth	1483.00	1524.00	+22.00	1.51
-do- Accum	1838.00	1905.00	+28.00	1.51
Special Sits	152.30	162.10	+ 2.10	1.81
High Yield	1791.00	1847.00	+29.80	3.88

CAZENOVE UNIT TRUST MGMT LTD
0171 606 0709

Cazenove Portfolio	114.24	121.70	+ 1.19	2.33
American Portfolio	161.56	171.33	+ 1.22	0.71
European Portfolio	164.37	174.82	+ 1.27	0.41
High Income	54.65	57.73	+ 0.41	6.89
Japanese Portfolio	55.72	60.15†	- 0.80	-
Pacific Portfolio	153.06	164.58	+ 0.02	0.73
UK Equity	112.95	120.60	+ 1.70	2.82
UK Equity & Bd	85.75	88.88	+ 0.87	5.16
UK Smlr Cos	53.81	56.91‡	+ 0.22	1.69

CBF CHURCH OF ENGLAND FUNDS
0171 588 1815

Inv Fd Inc	931.64	915.26	-13.34	3.78
Inv Fd Acc	922.22	936.10	-13.64	-

CCF UNIT TRUST MGRS LTD
0345 717 373

Gilts & Fxd Inc	138.80	147.30†	+ 1.50	6.19
High Inc Equity	216.10	231.10	+ 4.40	4.36
Worldwide Bond	274.60	291.20†	+ 2.30	3.40
American Growth	539.80	576.90	+11.60	0.29
Asian Pacific	328.60	351.70	+ 7.10	0.29
Assets & Earnings	308.50	329.90	+ 6.80	2.60
Euro Capital Acc	245.90	263.00	+ 5.10	0.76
Euro Inc	43.50	46.31†	+ 0.20	5.49
General	208.40	222.90	+ 4.30	1.86
Global Opps	83.46	88.79†	+ 0.84	0.38
Japan	93.27	99.75	+ 1.15	-
Managed Inc	92.04	95.36†	+ 0.55	4.06
Mastertrend	197.00	204.30†	+ 1.90	1.09
US Emerging Cos	231.60	247.70	+ 2.30	-
Special Sits	88.52	92.04	+ 0.87	1.99
International	155.30	165.20	+ 1.20	0.53
Dividend & Growth	79.64	84.72	+ 1.52	4.12
Global Opps & Sec	77.56	82.51	+ 0.32	2.44
Latin America	97.10	103.30†	+ 1.10	0.65
Capital Reserve	154.60	151.70	+ 0.60	4.61

ABBEY NATIONAL UNIT TRUST MGRS LTD
0141 275 6500

M&P UK Growth	109.80	116.60	+ 2.10	1.03
Equity Income #	152.00	161.70†	+ 2.40	2.73
Extra Income #	200.30	208.80†	+ 1.60	3.66
Smaller Cos	104.50	111.10†	..	2.91
International	133.40	141.90	+ 1.80	1.25

ABERDEEN UNIT TRUST MGRS LTD
0800 833 580

American	81.16	84.38	+ 2.22	-
Emerging Mkts	77.36	80.58	- 0.13	-
European	176.04	183.11	+ 2.34	-
Extra Income #	55.18	58.06†	+ 0.70	5.36
Far East Exp Eqty	117.44	118.88	- 0.97	0.58
Fixed Interest #	21.18	22.36†	+ 0.01	6.29
Fund Inv Tst #	166.66	174.97	- 0.69	9.74
Japan	168.31	174.76†	- 1.54	-
Latin American	79.91	85.84†	+ 0.56	-
Pacific	75.10	78.94	- 0.29	0.26
Property	85.00	89.24	+ 0.54	1.63
UK Emerging Cos	68.56	74.08	..	0.69
UK Growth	68.58	69.76	+ 1.23	1.45
Wrld Wide Port #	92.27	97.12	+ 1.06	2.60
Ethical	81.27	87.84	+ 0.63	1.71
Aberdeen Gilt Inc #	50.60	50.60†	- 0.13	6.68

ABERFORTH UNIT TRUST MGRS LTD
0131 220 0733

UK Smalls Cos	2446.00	2552.00	..	-

AIRWAYS UNIT TRUST MGRS LTD
0171 256 5868

Recpt Property #	109.20	116.10	..	4.89

ALLCHURCHES MW MGMT SYS LTD
01452 305 958

Arnly Income	104.42	110.79‡	+ 0.16	1.89
Income Builder Inc	93.79	99.78	+ 1.26	3.52

For Old Dunbar see Threadneedle

B & C E UNIT TRUST MGMT LTD
01253 505 911

Dstrbtd Dist Perfc	136.70	142.00	+ 2.60	-
Founder Perf Perfc	89.42	93.56	+ 0.72	-

BAILLIE GIFFORD & CO LTD
0131 222 4242

Americal	468.40	498.30†	+ 4.30	-
Bond	124.59	130.80	..	6.43
Brit Smlr Cos	114.78	122.00	+ 0.42	1.89
Europe	369.42	392.60	+ 8.10	-
Exec Sustr Cos	134.89	143.90	+ 0.62	0.31
High Income #	67.85	72.10‡	+ 0.65	5.39
Income	403.20	428.90†	+ 2.70	3.56
Japan	308.80	327.20	- 1.70	-
Latin American	120.20	127.90	+ 1.60	-
Pacific	117.60	125.10	+ 0.30	0.52
UK Smlr Cos	62.16	66.15	+ 0.19	1.29
Japan Fd	558.10	576.20	+ 4.30	-
Unpd Fd	244.00	259.20	+ 2.50	2.41

BANK OF IRELAND FUND MGRS LTD
0171 489 8673

Bal & Otsec	439.10	464.40	..	0.76
Capital Gwth	158.10	167.20	..	2.50
Wrwide Oppc	248.30	262.70	..	0.83

BARCLAYS UNICORN LTD
0181 542 4000

Balanced Trust:				
Gwth & Inc Inc	514.10	546.90	+ 11.70	5.53
Managed Bd Inc	89.26	102.60	+ 0.49	5.94
Exempt	102.40	109.00	+ 2.50	2.11
500	506.80	544.90‡	+ 2.90	2
General	390.60	415.50†	+ 4.10	1.86
Property	263.20	282.40	..	5.69
Trustee	277.20	294.80	+ 6.10	1.61
Income Trusts				
Cash Inc	101.10	101.10	..	6.38
Distribution #	125.40	126.60†	+ 1.70	5.16
Extra Income #	167.50	178.70	+ 3.60	4.20
Gilt & Fxd Int	82.05	83.97‡	+ 0.65	7.29
Income #	630.50	736.50	+13.40	4.13
Income Builder #	78.96	84.09‡	+ 1.44	4.75
Intl Income	85.94	91.42	+ 1.75	1.37
Growth Trusts - UK				
Capital	174.10	185.30†	+ 4.20	1.44
FTSE 100	128.30	136.20	+ 3.50	1.80
Smlr Cos Inc	59.47	63.43‡	+ 0.10	2.21
UK Growth	499.70	534.30	+11.40	1.64
Growth Trusts - Overseas				
Americas	236.40	250.50	+ 6.60	0.11
F East Gwth Acc	381.40	398.40	+ 1.90	0.33
Far East Gwth	156.70	177.30	- 1.10	0.33
Euro Gwth Inc	337.60	361.20†	+ 5.00	0.36
-do- Accum	358.90	375.10	+ 5.50	0.36
Japan	119.80	124.70	- 1.60	-
-do- Accum	118.20	125.60	- 1.60	-
Japan Spec Sits	84.96	88.57	- 0.86	-
Worldwide	225.70	239.60	+ 3.30	0.56

BARING FUND MANAGERS LTD
0171 214 1004

American Growth	181.00	191.10	+ 5.00	-
Amer Smlr Cos	187.70	199.20	+ 1.40	-
Eastern	272.70	292.70	+ 1.20	0.30
Equity Income #	119.80	127.80	+ 1.50	4.00
European Growth	480.80	510.50	+ 7.40	0.80
Europe	451.20	481.30	+ 2.10	0.80
German Growth	110.40	117.30	+ 1.50	0.50
Global Bond	74.01	77.86	+ 0.45	4.60
Global Growth	175.30	185.70	+ 0.80	0.40
Japan Growth	153.30	162.90	- 3.40	-
Japan Smaller	105.60	111.70	- 1.20	-
Korea Trust	50.44	54.98	- 0.10	-
Pacific Basin	172.10	183.20†	+ 2.70	2.00
-do- Accum	332.30	353.60	+ 5.10	2.00
UK Growth	127.50	136.50	+ 2.50	3.00
UK Smaller Cos	113.40	123.00	+ 0.60	1.90
Select Managers	98.97	105.30	+ 0.90	1.60

BLACKSTONE FRANKS UT MGRS LTD
0171 250 3000

Intl Gwth Port Inc	106.10	112.90	..	-
Special Opps Inc	75.13	79.93‡	..	-

BRITANNIA FUND MGRS LTD
0141 223 6020

Balanced Growth	176.88	184.26	+ 1.32	1.10
-do- Accum	207.00	215.63	+ 1.54	1.10
Smaller Cos	175.78	183.10	+ 0.19	0.38
Higher Yield #	67.84	70.67	+ 1.44	3.74
American Gth Inc	138.88	144.67†	+ 1.86	-
European Growth	202.90	211.43‡	+ 1.73	-
-do- Accum	207.32	215.96	+ 1.76	-
Mngd Portfolio Inc	63.77	66.43‡	+ 0.71	1.27
-do- Accum	66.63	69.61	+ 0.77	1.27
Int Spec Opps	212.07	220.90	- 0.05	-
Pacific Gth Inc	171.25	178.39	+ 0.66	-
UK General #	120.59	125.61	+ 2.56	2.83
-do- Accum #	132.80	138.34	+ 2.82	2.83
Japan	48.51	50.53	- 0.54	-
Gilt & Fixed Int #	106.42	110.28†	+ 1.40	7.61

BURRAGE UNIT TST MGMT LTD
0171 480 7215

Short Dated Gilt	86.04	86.89	+ 0.35	6.25

CIS UNIT MANAGERS LTD
0161 837 3000

Growth	207.70	218.70	+ 2.80	1.53
UK Growth	250.40	277.00†	+ 3.60	1.64
UK Income	179.20	188.60	+ 3.70	3.70

CANADA LIFE MGMT (UK) LTD
01707 632 100

Can Gen Dist	273.90	290.30	+ 4.50	1.36
-do- Income Dist	151.50	160.60	+ 2.60	3.11
-do- Accum	524.20	534.40	+ 8.60	3.11
Gilt & Fxd Int	42.55	44.71‡	+ 0.29	6.08
Growth Units	315.60	337.60†	+ 5.90	1.73
Bond	180.60	193.10†	+ 1.60	6.10
Intl Growth	264.20	270.50	+ 2.00	0.17
North American	329.70	345.10	+ 6.20	-
Far East	271.80	290.70	+ 2.30	0.67
UK Smaller Cos	245.30	262.30	+ 0.10	1.09
European	118.90	124.30	+ 1.80	0.41
Japanese Growth	36.73	38.92	- 0.46	-
High Income	282.00	279.90†	+ 4.50	3.63

CAPEL-CURE MYERS UT MGMT LTD
0161 831 7433 Enq 0161 831 7433 Dlg 0161 831 7465

American & Gen	290.26	306.90†	+ 5.50	-
European Inc	121.90	129.50†	+ 2.00	0.10
Smaller Cos (4-1)	108.80	117.00†	+ 0.60	1.76
Growth	653.60	695.40†	+ 5.20	1.86
Income & Growth #	563.30	598.70	+ 9.70	4.35
-do- Accum #	864.30	919.50	+15.10	4.35
Japan & Gen	57.95	61.40	- 0.64	-
Helmsort Gwth	1483.00	1524.00	+22.00	1.51
-do- Accum	1838.00	1905.00	+28.00	1.51
Special Sits	152.30	162.10	+ 2.10	1.81
High Yield	1791.00	1847.00	+29.80	3.88

CAZENOVE UNIT TRUST MGMT LTD
0171 606 0709

Cazenove Portfolio	114.24	121.70	+ 1.19	2.33
American Portfolio	161.56	171.33	+ 1.22	0.71
European Portfolio	164.37	174.82	+ 1.27	0.41
High Income	54.65	57.73	+ 0.41	6.89
Japanese Portfolio	55.72	60.15†	- 0.80	-
Pacific Portfolio	153.06	164.58	+ 0.02	0.73
UK Equity	112.95	120.60	+ 1.70	2.82
UK Equity & Bd	85.75	88.88	+ 0.87	5.16
UK Smlr Cos	53.81	56.91‡	+ 0.22	1.69

CBF CHURCH OF ENGLAND FUNDS
0171 588 1815

Inv Fd Inc	931.64	915.26	-13.34	3.78
Inv Fd Acc	922.22	936.10	-13.64	-

CCF UNIT TST MGRS
0345 717 373

Gilts & Fxd Inc	138.80	147.30†	+ 1.50	6.19
High Inc Equity	216.10	231.10	+ 4.40	4.36
Worldwide Bond	274.60	291.20†	+ 2.30	3.40
American Growth	539.80	576.90	+11.60	0.29
Asian Pacific	328.60	351.70	+ 7.10	0.29
Assets & Earnings	308.50	329.90	+ 6.80	2.60
Euro Capital Acc	245.90	263.00	+ 5.10	0.76
Euro Inc	43.50	46.31†	+ 0.20	5.49
General	208.40	222.90	+ 4.30	1.86
Global Opps	83.46	88.79†	+ 0.84	0.38
Japan	93.27	99.75	+ 1.15	-
Managed Inc	92.04	95.36†	+ 0.55	4.06
Mastertrend	197.00	204.30†	+ 1.90	1.09
US Emerging Cos	231.60	247.70	+ 2.30	-
Special Sits	88.52	92.04	+ 0.87	1.99
International	155.30	165.20	+ 1.20	0.53
Dividend & Growth	79.64	84.72	+ 1.52	4.12
Global Opps & Sec	77.56	82.51	+ 0.32	2.44
Latin America	97.10	103.30†	+ 1.10	0.65
Capital Reserve	154.60	151.70	+ 0.60	4.61

ABBEY NATIONAL UNIT TRUST MGRS LTD
0141 275 6500

M&P UK Growth	109.80	116.60	+ 2.10	1.03
Equity Income #	152.00	161.70†	+ 2.40	2.73
Extra Income #	200.30	208.80†	+ 1.60	3.66
Smaller Cos	104.50	111.10†	..	2.91
International	133.40	141.90	+ 1.80	1.25

ABERDEEN UNIT TRUST MGRS LTD
0800 833 580

American	81.16	84.38	+ 2.22	-
Emerging Mkts	77.36	80.58	- 0.13	-
European	176.04	183.11	+ 2.34	-
Extra Income #	55.18	58.06†	+ 0.70	5.36
Far East Exp Eqty	117.44	118.88	- 0.97	0.58
Fixed Interest #	21.18	22.36†	+ 0.01	6.29
Fund Inv Tst #	166.66	174.97	- 0.69	9.74
Japan	168.31	174.76†	- 1.54	-
Latin American	79.91	85.84†	+ 0.56	-
Pacific	75.10	78.94	- 0.29	0.26
Property	85.00	89.24	+ 0.54	1.63
UK Emerging Cos	68.56	74.08	..	0.69
UK Growth	68.58	69.76	+ 1.23	1.45
Wrld Wide Port #	92.27	97.12	+ 1.06	2.60
Ethical	81.27	87.84	+ 0.63	1.71
Aberdeen Gilt Inc #	50.60	50.60†	- 0.13	6.68

ABERFORTH UNIT TRUST MGRS LTD
0131 220 0733

UK Smalls Cos	2446.00	2552.00	..	-

AIRWAYS UNIT TRUST MGRS LTD
0171 256 5868

Recpt Property #	109.20	116.10	..	4.89

ALLCHURCHES MW MGMT SYS LTD
01452 305 958

Arnly Income	104.42	110.79‡	+ 0.16	1.89
Income Builder Inc	93.79	99.78	+ 1.26	3.52

For Old Dunbar see Threadneedle

B & C E UNIT TRUST MGMT LTD
01253 505 911

Dstrbtd Dist Perfc	136.70	142.00	+ 2.60	-
Founder Perf Perfc	89.42	93.56	+ 0.72	-

BAILLIE GIFFORD & CO LTD
0131 222 4242

Americal	468.40	498.30†	+ 4.30	-
Bond	124.59	130.80	..	6.43

KAZAKHSTAN

FOCUS

David Watts introduces a three-page report on a country that is moving quickly to develop its rich resources

Nation poised at the crossroads

Even by the standards of the former Eastern bloc, few countries have undergone as rapid a transformation as Kazakhstan. Once the dumping ground for ethnic minorities that Stalin found inconvenient, and later a testing ground for the Soviet Union's most unpalatable weapons systems, the country has moved so fast to privatised modernisation that signs of a hankering for the old ways are evident.

If the Kazakhs give the impression that they are trying to transform themselves too quickly, it is hardly surprising given the world demand for the country's oil, gas and numerous other mineral resources. Scarcely a single developed Western country is unrepresented among the legions of business people flying into Almaty, the capital, and few Asian countries, either. Almost 100 companies are represented at a two-day investment conference starting today in London, an indication of the interest being shown in the potential of this country at the crossroads of Europe and Asia.

President Nazarbayev has shown great skill in maintaining the unity of the country during the post-Communist period when anti-Russian feeling could easily have spilt over into clashes between Kazakhs and Russians, who have played such a large part in the country's economy. He is also one of the few leaders to negotiate successfully the transition from Communism through his standing in what is essentially a tribal society. He enjoys overwhelming support in the presidency, which is contested every five years.

Britain and America are in the forefront of the drive to develop Kazakhstan's oil resources as a complementary source of supply to the Middle East.

In world terms, the Central Asian states' reserves are still a fraction of those in the Middle East. Kazhakstan's proven reserves are eight billion barrels, according to British Petroleum, compared to Iran's 93 billion and Iraq's 112 billion. But Kazakhstan's position and its strategic potential make it attractive to Western governments.

Advanced technology in oil recovery allows Western countries to gain a quick foothold in an area starved of modern industrial technology and Western interest and capital for more than 50 years. Equally, for the West, the potential benefits of making friends on the periphery not only of the old Soviet empire but on the edge of its Chinese equivalent are obvious.

> To bring in Western money the Government has been willing to create laws to deal with the new reality

To bring in Western money and expertise, the Government of Kazakhstan has been willing to create laws to deal with the new reality — often with frightening speed and simplicity of approach. This can be risky: the Government could change its mind just as quickly.

Some see the return of the old system of centralisation through this arbitrary, extra-legal approach. New investors should take care to understand what they are dealing with before making financial commitments. This becomes even more advisable because the Government is now taking the South-East Asian "tiger" economies as its model, with the concomitent desire to place economic progress above everything else. As a result, inflation was allowed to accelerate to four figures at one stage, with a consequent disastrous effect on living standards.

This tendency to disregard the lot of the ordinary worker is nowhere more evident than in the grandiose plans to move the capital from Almaty to Akmola at the turn of the century. There is a certain logic in moving the state capital to an area that is now Russian-dominated as a means of better uniting the multifarious ethnic groups. But the estimated cost is $1 billion.

Akmola, a farming town in mosquito-ridden fields, seems an unlikely prospect as a capital. But President Nazarbayev seems determined to go ahead — and unwilling to acknowledge that his Government is presently unable even to meet salaries and pensions in full. The problem is that the President is offering tax incentives to those willing to contribute, as indeed he is to foreign investors. This is having a detrimental effect on the budget, itself the beneficiary of a $450 million credit line from the International Monetary Fund. The credit is dependent on the containment of project costs at $500 million.



SHAMIL ZHUMATOV

A traditional Kazakh hunter releases his specially trained eagle



BALANCE SHEET

	1995	96	97*
Total GDP ($bn):	-	19.1	20.6
GDP % change (constant prices):	-8.9	+1.4	+2.8
Industrial output % change:	-7.9	+0.5	+1.2
Agricultural output % change:	-21.3	0.0	+1.0
Consumer prices % change (end year):	+60.3	+40.1	+29.0
Consumer prices % change (annual av):	+176.3	+51.1	+35.0
Average wages % change:	+70.5	+23.0	n/a
Broad money % change (end year):	+116.0	+70.0	n/a
Total trade balance ($bn):	-0.2	-0.6	n/a
Exports ($bn):	5.2	5.4	n/a
Imports ($bn):	5.4	6.0	n/a
Foreign direct investment ($m):	723	860	n/a
Unemployment rate %:	2.4	3.5	n/a
Proved oil reserves (billion barrels)	At end 1996:		8.0
Proved natural gas reserve (trn m³)	At end 1996:		1.84

*Projection Sources: EBRD; BP Statistical Review of World Energy 1997

Signs of life stir in the economy

As trade routes open up, foreign investors are coming in. **Ahmed Rashid** reports

Since gaining independence seven years ago, landlocked Kazakhstan has been desperately seeking exit routes for its vast oil, gas and mineral resources. But creating trade routes has been the hardest task, thanks to wars in Afghanistan and the Caucasus to the south, a difficult Russia, which wants to restrain Kazakhstan's growth, to the west, and problems with China over their common border.

And since independence, the Central Asian Republics have suffered from low growth, high inflation and a decline in industrial output compared with when they were part of the Soviet Union.

> The new stock market has been a great success

But Kazakhstan may be about to turn the corner; it is showing the first signs of economic growth since the Soviet Union broke up, and is opening up trade routes to the west and the east, while the rapid privatisation of the economy has encouraged European, American and Japanese investors.

Earlier this year, the Finance Minister, Aleksandr Pavlov, said Kazakhstan was slowly achieving economic stability. Industrial output grew by 0.3 per cent in 1996, compared with an 8 per cent fall in 1995 and even larger drops right after independence. Mr Pavlov expects gross domestic product (GDP), which stood at 1.41 trillion tenge ($18 billion) in 1996, would grow to 1.74 trillion tenge in 1997.

In June government leaders told a conference for foreign investors that inflation, now 17 per cent, would be reduced to 10 per cent in 1998, and that 80 per cent of the country's enterprises had been privatised. The privatisation of the main industrial assets, farmland and even shops has been helped by loans and expertise from the European Community. The new stock market has been a great success and a new leasing law is expected to be passed by the end of this year, which will encourage further foreign investment.

Kazakhstan also plans to join the World Trade Organisation and make its currency, the tenge, fully convertible by next year. There is a slow but steady industrial revival and its potential agricultural wealth, particularly in wheat production, is being boosted by foreign technology and improved water management. After settling their border problems, China has emerged as the largest trade partner. A railway line now delivers Chinese consumer items and machinery directly from Beijing to Almaty. In return, Kazakhstan exports wheat and oil products.

But Western investors have warned the Government that the stability and full implementation of contract terms and a fair and uniform application of new investment laws is needed if the country was to attract greater foreign investment. Kazakhstan has a poor reputation for observing contract terms, particularly in rebuilding its infrastructure, because of frequent cancellations of signed contracts with Western companies. There are also complaints about corruption.

Nevertheless, with high inflation and unemployment, many still face hardship. Tens of thousands of people, especially in the mining sector, went on strike during the 1996-97 winter because of unpaid wages and pensions totalling $800 million. The Government has since paid off much of the backlog thanks to recently signed oil deals.

President Nazarbayev has said one way to cut costs would be to reduce the one million bureaucrats who rule a population of 17 million. To this end, he sacked thousands of government employees in May.

Kazakhstan's economic future depends on the exploitation of its oil and gas reserves and it is this area which has attracted foreign investors in recent months, as hopes rise that pipelines can now be built eastward and westward, ending the country's long isolation.

KAZAKHOIL

Playing its role in nation building

Production and Refining of Hydrocarbons

KAZAKHOIL is the largest oil and gas company operating in the Republic of Kazakhstan. During the first half of 1997, enterprises of the company produced more than 10 million tons oil, 1 million tons of condensate and 2.732 BCM of gas. Subsidiaries and joint ventures of the company are engaged in developing some of the best production projects and are well known outside of Kazakhstan. They include JSC Embamunaigas, JSC Tengizmunaigas, JV Tengizchevroil (with reserves of 1 billion tons of gas condensate), among others. The company's aggregate volume of oil reserves is more than 1.5 billion tons.

Marketing and Sales of Hydrocarbons

The company pays special attention to the organization of marketing and effective sales of products. Our department for project management and our subsidiary KAZAKHOIL-COMMERCE carry out special research of energy markets both in Kazakhstan and abroad. The company is also a major trader in Central Asia. Exports of the five largest enterprises affiliated in one way or another with the company amounted to 3.5 million tons of oil for the first half of 1997. KAZAKHOIL has set itself the goal of increasing sales of refined products. The company attaches special significance to its activity on Kazakhstan's internal market.

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The program for Restructuring and Privatizing the Oil and Gas Sector.

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Management of Projects

The company represent and defends the State's interests by managing the State's portfolio of shares and its equity interests in such international projects as the Caspian Pipeline Consortium, as well as various joint ventures and production sharing agreements. In accordance with a government resolution, the company is charged with organizing investment tenders and conducting negotiations on exploration and production projects in Kazakhstan, including Kazakhstan's sector of the Caspian and the Aral Sea. KAZAKHOIL is also authorized to attract investments through securities operations.

The Resource Base

The Republic's established hydrocarbon reserves of category oil for 206 discovered fields amount to more than 6 billion tons of oil, 1.901 trillion cubic meters of gas and 944 million tons of gas condensate.

At present, 77 fields are under development with aggregate reserves of 5.17 billion tons oil, 1.528 trillion cubic meters of gas and 890 million tons of gas condensate.

The largest of these fields according to established reserves are Tengiz, Karachaganak, Kenbai, Zhanazhol, Zhetyabai, Kalamkas, Karazhanbas, Uzen and Kunkol. Their aggregate reserves are 4.480 billion tons of oil, 1.448 trillion cubic meters of gas and 881 million tons of gas condensate. Projections for an increase in established oil reserves by the year 2005 amount to 15 billion tons.

The Republic's most prospective projects will involve development of Kazakhstan's sector of the Caspian offshore, where projected reserves of liquid hydrocarbons are estimated at 10 billion tons and investments in developing offshore fields should total $150 B.

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Door opens for West

David Rudnick on how bureaucratic burdens have been swept away in a bid to attract Western companies

In the words of President Nazarbayev, foreign investors now have a "one-stop shop" to guide them into Kazakhstan. Since March the State Committee on Investments has been the sole government body that foreign investors have to deal with. This has streamlined procedures and reduced bureaucratic delay. A raft of legislation safeguards foreign investors' rights, reinforced further by newly adopted international accounting standards, legal codes and company reporting rules.

Generous tax holidays are on offer to foreign investors: the bigger the project, the bigger the tax break. Up to 100 per cent off the basic rate of income tax, land tax and property tax is available during the first five years of an investment project. Thereafter, reductions of up to 50 per cent off the same taxes apply for the next five years.

Foreign investors also qualify for complete or partial exemption from customs duties normally levied on imports of equipment and raw materials. And as a further incentive, the Government is set to offer more generous tax allowances on depreciation, to speed up industrial renovation and modernisation.

Foreign investors in priority sectors of the economy already benefit from government grants, which may include the provision of free state-owned land and industrial equipment.

One of the most challenging projects under way is the development of Kazakhstan's first Special Economic Zone, Kzyl-Orda. Located in the windswept centre of the country, the pioneering city has already attracted the Canadian oil company, Hurricane Hydrocarbons, which has pledged to invest $280 million (£175 million) over the next six years.

The legal undertakings which the Government has given foreign investors guarantees their right to manage their enterprises freely. Investors' profits and dividends are similarly protected by law, as is their right to convert local currency into hard currency and repatriate funds. The Government has also undertaken not to impose price controls on raw material inputs or finished products.

Potential investors requiring further information on tax and investment laws and regulations can approach the International Tax and Investment Centre, an independent non-profit organisation that brings together Western companies and government officials in monthly forums.

Alistair King, of the law firm Baker & McKenzie, who is based in Almaty, believes that the practical value of the legal guarantees offered to foreign investors is not at issue. "Problems can arise at micro level," he says. "The one-stop shop approach means that relevant ministries may not be brought into the picture at the start, creating problems later."

Day-to-day disputes centre on detailed regulatory concerns rather than the overall investment framework. Mr King says: "Experience has shown that the grant of a concession to produce locally may not ensure a permit to export the product."

Mr King adds that extensive diligence is needed by a Western investor in any joint venture partnership.

"Legal ownership of assets may at first glance lie with your putative partner, but the legal documentation is often less than conclusive."

Still, the legal framework should be adequate to underpin the activities of Almaty's new stock exchange, due to open by the end of this month. The exchange will feature three tiers of trading and the Government plans to sell off 5-10 per cent of shares in several partly privatised "blue chip" enterprises including oil companies, metal plants and Kazaktelecom.

The stock exchange's regulatory system has been prepared with the help of foreign advisers, but Mr King believes that further regulatory provision will be needed after trading begins. "Central depositories and an active trading environment are still novel concepts in Kazakhstan." So fine portfolio investment, as opposed to direct investment, may take time to take off.

Whether President Nazarbayev achieves his ambition of making Kazakhstan the first Central Asian tiger depends crucially on his success in attracting foreign investment. Foreign investors appreciate Kazakhstan's strong Government and political stability and the backing it has from the international community.

The United States has signed a security pact with Kazakhstan. And Kazakhstan's friendship with fellow Muslim countries, notably Malaysia and Indonesia, is stimulating serious investor interest there.

BORIS BUZIN/REUTERS



Odds-on favourite: a Kazakh horseman wins a kiss in this traditional event known as *Kyz Kuu*, or "catch a girl"

Land of steppes and deserts

Peter Brown supplies the facts and figures

With an area of 2.7 million square kilometres, Kazakhstan is the ninth largest country in the world, but its population is less than 17 million. Most of the country is steppe, and 40 per cent is desert, though it has forests, mountains and glaciers. The climate is dramatic. Temperatures can range from almost 50C in summer to minus 40C in winter.

The capital Almaty has a population of 1.17 million, but the President has decreed a new capital: Akmola, a former caravan halt on the Silk Route, which has a population of about 300,000.

Like most countries formerly under the Soviet umbrella, Kazakhstan suffers from some pollution. Kyzl-Orda, in the middle of the country, is not only a Special Economic Zone, but also designated an Ecological Disaster Area by the United Nations because of its river pollution.

In June, Kazakhstan destroyed its last nuclear bomb as part of an agreement that the Kazakhs claim brought them under an American security umbrella (a point which President Nazerbayev will raise in Washington this year). Meanwhile, years of nuclear testing have reduced life expectancy and increased cancer rates in the Semipalatinsk region.

None of this is likely to deter investors. For them, travel arrangements are improving. Flights go from Frankfurt, Vienna, Amsterdam and Istanbul to Almaty airport, which is managed by Lufthansa. KLM and Turkish Airlines are among the carriers, and British Airways may join them soon. A chartered flight to Uralsk via Italy leaves Stansted twice a week. The bigger cities of Karaganda, Chimkent, Semipalatinsk and Atyrau also have their own airfields. The roads are best suited to 4x4 vehicles.

Living standards are improving and hotels are springing up fast. Almaty has a Hyatt Regency and a five-star Ankara Hotel. The dollar is the currency of choice. In general the language is Kazakh in the regions and Russian in the cities, although perhaps 30 per cent of the urban population speaks English.

● *Visa and other information: 0171-581 4646. DTI exporting advice: 0171-215 8215. Details of this week's Investing in Kazakhstan conference at the Royal Garden Hotel, London: 0171-453 2703*

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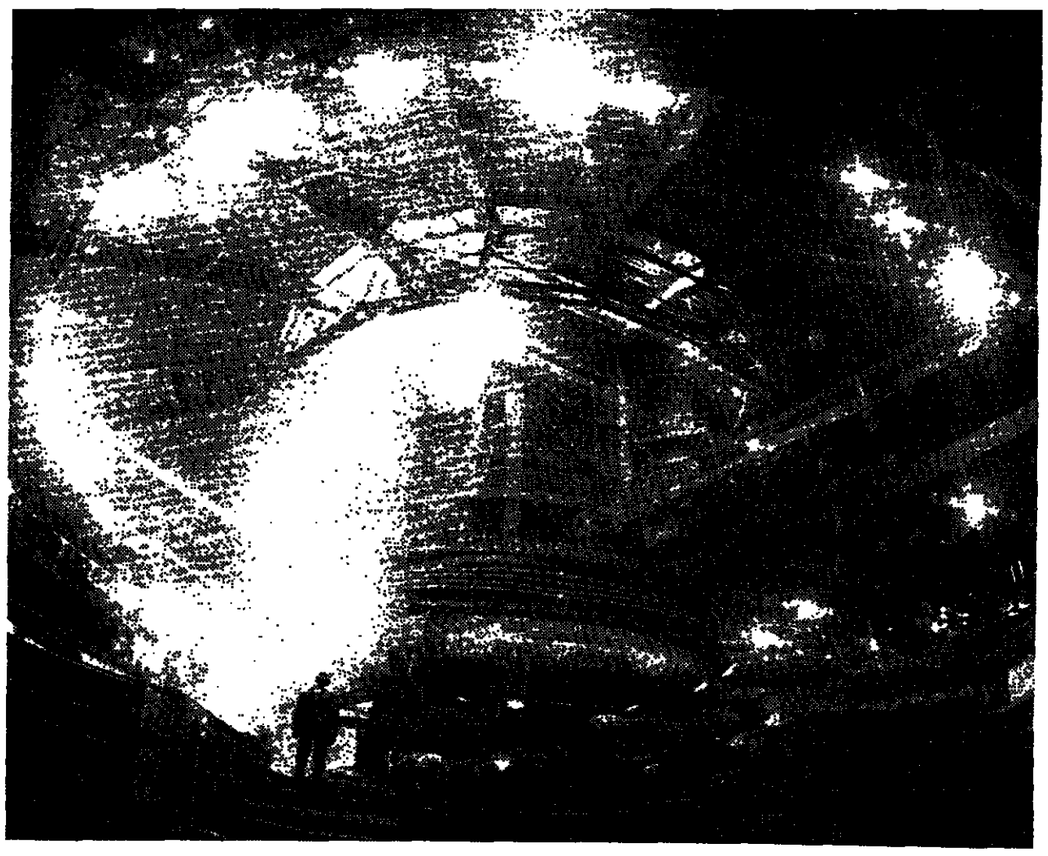
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An oil giant of the future

Ahmed Rashid discovers foreign investors competing for a share of the natural resources

Western and Asian oil companies have been flocking to Almaty to take up oil concessions as Kazakhstan aims to become the sixth largest oil producer in the world in the next century. With potential oil reserves of 95 billion barrels, eight billion of which are proven reserves, and more than four trillion cubic metres of gas reserves, not surprisingly Kazakhstan is being called the next Saudi Arabia.

After independence, American oil companies were the first to stake claims in Kazakhstan. Chevron and Mobil acquired the huge Tengiz field in western Kazakhstan, promising a potential ten-year investment programme of up to $20 billion. But until this year, these companies were hampered by Russia in their efforts to build export pipelines across the former Soviet Union to get the oil to Europe and the Gulf.

However, on May 16, Kazakhstan signed a landmark contract with Oman, Russia and several Western oil companies, including British Gas, to build a $2 billion, 1,500-kilometre pipeline from Tengiz to the Black Sea. Russia agreed to the project only after its oil companies were given a large stake in it.

Asian companies have also moved in quickly. In June, China's National Petroleum Company (CNPC) beat the American companies Texaco and Amoco to win a major oil concession in which CNPC would invest about $4 billion in the Aktyubinsk oil enterprise, taking a 60 per cent share.

The Kazakhs received a signature bonus (a cash bonus on signing the contract) of $320 million from the Chinese, which the Government said would go towards paying off the backlog in unpaid salaries and pensions. China also promised to build a pipeline from the concession to Xinjiang in eastern China and said that it would help Kazakhstan build a pipeline to the Gulf through Iran. Last month, CNPC won a tender giving it 60 per cent of the huge Uzen oil field, also in western Kazakhstan. CNPC promised an immediate investment of $400 million out of a total projected investment of $1.3 billion and paid Kazakhstan a $52 million signature bonus.

> 'All the political barriers have now been removed'

However, this summer, global interest in Kazakhstan's energy resources accelerated at a remarkable pace. The reason was that in July the US Administration for the first time said that it would not block or impose sanctions on a proposed gas pipeline from Turkmenistan to Turkey that would traverse northern Iran. Oil companies have been barred from investing in Iran or building pipelines through it, because of the threat of American sanctions. Suddenly an opening through Iran offers Kazakhstan a viable route to the Gulf which avoids Russia.

Although possibly premature, leaders in Central Asian now presume that the Americans would not block multiple pipeline routes for their energy resources through Iran.

"The shortest possible way from Kazakhstan to the Gulf is through Iran. All political barriers have been removed," President Nazarbayev said in Kuwait earlier this month, in answer to possible American objections to a pipeline to the Gulf. During his visit to three Gulf states, President Nazarbayev said that Kuwait would also help his country to extend oil and gas pipelines to the Gulf through Iran.

Last month Texaco at last won approval to acquire a 20 per cent stake in the Karachaganak oil and gas field from Britain's BG Exploration and Production and Italy's Agip, both of which will reduce their stakes.

Meanwhile Asian companies are moving in fast to bid for oil and gas concessions. Indonesian, Malaysian and several Japanese companies have already set up shop in Almaty. Indonesia's Medco group and Japan's Mitsui have taken a stake in the Mangistaumunaigaz production association in western Kazakhstan and are planning to invest more than $4 billion during the next 20 years. Asian companies could move Central Asia towards its natural direction, which is towards Asia. Moreover Asian companies are unfettered by the sanctions and political restraints faced by American companies.

However, Russia's powerful national gas company Gazprom reacted angrily to these deals, first cutting off the supply of gas to Kazakhstan's domestic users from gas fields in Siberia — a move that created an acute domestic summer crisis for the Government. Gazprom's chief executive Rem Vyakhirev said that he would not let Kazakhstan export gas through Russian pipelines. "Under no circumstances will Kazakhstan export gas through Russia," Mr Vyakhirev said last month. "To give up one's market ... would be, at the very least, a crime before Russia," he added.

Russia then made it difficult for Kazakhstan and Western oil companies to continue development of the massive Karachaganak oil field, by not allowing the companies involved to use Russian pipelines to export oil and gas, as promised by Gazprom.

Meanwhile Kazakhstan is also rapidly privatising its ageing gas and oil pipeline system and refineries in an attempt to bring in foreign investment and new technology. Kazakhstan also plans to build several new oil refineries. In June, Belgium's Tractebel won a $630 million contract to manage Kazakhstan's 9,000-kilometre gas pipeline system for 15 years, for which Kazakhstan received another $30 million as a signature bonus.

It remains to be seen, however, whether Iran will prove a viable exit route for Kazakh energy. Only when that happens will the Kazakhs be assured that Western investment in other industrial fields, such as development mineral resources, will follow.



President Nazarbayev's policies have cleared the way for drilling in the Caspian

David Rudnick pinpoints the growth sectors

Chance to invest in new markets

OPPORTUNITIES for private-sector investment in Kazakhstan abound and Western companies are responding.

The sector most in need of investment is energy. The Government admits there are chronic shortages and that $500 million-$600 million (£314 million-£377 million) is needed annually to build new generating plant. Accordingly, the privatisation programme is focusing on the electricity grid and gas pipeline, which the Government is hiving off to foreign companies.

In April, it awarded a 25-year concession to Asea Brown Boveri (ABB), the Swedish-Swiss engineering group, to operate the electricity grid. ABB beat the UK's National Grid for the deal, but had to agree to pay huge wage arrears, invest a minimum of $200 million in the next three years, and pocket a mere 15 per cent of net profits (85 per cent going to the Kazakhstan exchequer).

The electricity supply industry is suffering from the debt crisis affecting the whole economy. Enterprises owe, and are owed, enormous sums, and how much of these liabilities would have to be met by foreign investors is an open question. Undeterred, ABB is building three 320MW power stations in Kazakhstan and plans more.

Turning from electricity to gas, the Argentine oil company Bridas is negotiating a 15-year concession to operate Kazakhstan's natural gas pipeline. But the search continues for investors willing to fund an $80.7 million project to build gas and turbine plants in the Aktyubinsk region. An estimated $125 million is being sought from foreign investors to upgrade the pipeline.

The Government believes that telecommunications offer investors lower risk and quicker returns. Local telephone lines serve only 2.1 million users, although a further five million of Kazakhstan's 16.4 million people are potential customers. But increasing the number of telephone lines on this scale will cost several hundred million dollars and soak up substantial foreign capital.

Kazaktelecom, the national joint-stock telecommunications company, is owed about $100 million by its customers and itself owes almost DM500 million for equipment bought in Germany seven years ago. Investors would inherit these debts.

Agriculture accounts for about 30 per cent of Kazakhstan's national product and more than 40 per cent of the population is rural. Farming has yet to prove profitable — most farmers are crippled by debt — and is likely to become so only when farm prices and production methods are thoroughly market-oriented. In the absence of an integrated national market, where prices are known to all producers and consumers, that day may still be some way off.

Farmers' co-operatives after the Western pattern would be an improvement, but starting them up would be costly and demand a considerable injection of capital.

But companies are not exactly queuing to invest in Kazakhstan's agri-business. The epitome of old-style Soviet collectivism, agri-business retains a monopolistic character that puts most Western companies off.

Apart from Philip Morris, which acquired the state tobacco monopoly in 1994 on condition that it invested in the tobacco-growing region of Chimkent, there has been little interest.

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Perform, or no portfolio

A healthy banking system is critical for Kazakhstan's stable development, and steps are being taken to put banking on an even keel after the hyper-inflationary shocks of recent years.

Inflation of 1,250 per cent has caused an understandable aversion to saving. The ratio of bank deposits to gross domestic product in Kazakhstan is one of the lowest in the world, as is its savings rate of barely 5 per cent.

The Government must rebuild confidence in the banking system, battered by the related crises of payments arrears and corporate insolvency. To this end, in January it passed legislation allowing it to acquire the shares of bankrupt or underperforming banks hit by bad loans to enterprises ensnared in the debt crisis. Two of Kazakhstan's biggest banks, Turan Bank and Alem Bank, which together account for about 20 per cent of all sector loans, were nationalised (temporarily, it was hoped) and then merged to cut operating costs. Their subsequent recapitalisation by the National Bank (central bank) has provided a shot in the arm.

The Government's takeover of the two banks and subsequent classification of their portfolios as non-standard may have frozen their loans to an alarming number of enterprises, but the international financial community has hailed it as a step in the right direction.

Ron Freeman, of the investment bank Salomon Bros, believes the move has encouraged managements "to resolve the problems in their loan portfolios for fear of being taken over by the Government under the new law".

Another banker adds: "Bringing non-performing banks under the Government's wing has led to improved provisioning. The International Monetary Fund says it has also reduced non-performing loans in the system to 41 per cent, down from 55 per cent in 1994."

The Government's aim is to prop up Turan-Alem Bank until foreign capital deems it a viable concern.

But the underlying problem of corporate insolvency, a hangover from the Soviet past, remains unbeaten. Freezing non-standard loans actually makes their repayment more uncertain, whatever its potential long-term benefits. In theory, argues Mr Freeman, the Government could clean up the banks' balance sheets "by substituting obligations to itself, smaller in face amount and longer in maturity than the banks' existing portfolios". But for this to work, he adds, "the Government would need to be sure it could repay its own obligations to the banks when they fall due, and that would depend on its revenues expanding appreciably".

> The Government has taken action to restore confidence in the banking system. **David Rudnick** reports

Ultimately, he concludes, resolution of the problem depends on an improvement in the Government's sovereign creditworthiness, which will be the benchmark influencing future investment decisions by foreign pension funds and other institutions assessing Kazakhstan.

Meanwhile, a system of domestic private pension funds is being devised by Grigori Marchenko, the high-flying head of the State Committee on Securities. His job is to develop the capital markets, and he sees private pension funds potentially investing their customers' contributions in banks and financial markets, alleviating the current dearth of domestically generated capital.

Most foreign banks and investing institutions are watching and waiting. The Dutch bank ABN-Amro has established a joint venture with Kazkommerts Bank, specialising in foreign exchange and trade finance. But deeper commitment to purely domestic corporate and retail loan markets remains beyond the horizon.

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Accept manages 5 spirit plants in Kazakhstan, a network of retail stores, agricultural enterprises, including four elevators with the total capacity of 120 tons each.

Accept Corporation won the tender for the exclusive right to computerise the custom service of Kazakhstan. Taraz Joint Stock Corporation in Taraz city, is being managed by Accept since fall of 1995 and produces Kazakhstan's most popular brands of vodka, 'Kazakhstan' and 'Taraz'. These have both won gold medals while 'Berkut' brand has been honored with the silver award at the international contest.

Over $18 million has been invested in Accept owned and managed enterprises for the improvement of quality and output of its products. The total turnover of Accept Corporation and its managing company in 1996 exceeded $100 million.

One of the aims Accept Corporation is pursuing is to saturate the market with domestic high quality products. The Corporation's goal is growth and development of all activities. The Corporation is always striving for renovation and development, new spheres of capital investment and creation of new business.

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Almaty Merchant Bank

A joint venture with MeesPierson N.V.
Established on June,2, 1995
General license No. 239

Almaty Merchant Bank was established at the end of 1995, when the first signs of macroeconomic and financial stabilization appeared in Kazakhstan and the banking sector had been practically formed. However the extremely competitive environment in which AMB started its operations was not an obstacle, in the contrary, it made for the dynamic development of the newly-established bank.

AMB's success is based on several reasons. On one hand, AMB is a local Kazakhstani bank. The management board and the staff of the bank are almost fully represented by local specialists who perfectly understand all nuances of Kazakhstani business. On the other hand, due to wide international contacts, partnership and shareholding relations with leading Western financial institutions, AMB's activities go beyond the borders of Kazakhstan.

AMB is a universal bank which provides its clients with a wide range of banking services used in the Kazakhstani and international experience and specializes in trade finance and investment projects.

The strategic priorities of the Bank are reliability and high technological level of services. The goal of AMB is to become a leader in the market of banking services in Kazakhstan by introducing international banking experience and advanced banking technologies.

Although AMB has been active on the market for a very short time since June 1996, it already has a reputation of a reliable and competitive financial institution with great opportunities.

A number of the first-class Western banks opened credit lines for AMB to confirm guarantees and letter of credit. The Bank's specialists were trained at MeesPieron N.V. in the Netherlands and professionally handle all kinds of documentary credit, international guarantees and develop advanced schemes for international trade finance operations.

Over a short period of its existence AMB has built up a strong client base including major oil companies, trading companies, leading hotels as well as companies accounting for 2/3 of the country's alcohol, liqueur and winery production.

Apart from traditional banking services of international quality, Almaty Merchant Bank offers its clients a wide range of consultancy services including financial analysis of companies, development of general investment strategies, debt restructuring, holding of auctions and tenders, search for strategic partners as well as services on mergers and acquisitions, privatization, issue of shares and other securities.

In view of recent changes in the banking legislation of Kazakhstan, under which banks are allowed to participate in investment activities, Almaty Merchant Bank is considering setting up private pension funds, companies for management of pension assets, investment funds, insurance and leasing companies.

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Sam Mendes's stunning Shakespeare at the National; strange Eastern rituals in the East End; Romanians in Bristol

Dark deeds played to thrill

Othello
Cottesloe

The tragedy begins with Brabantio being roused from his bed in Venice, and ends with his daughter and son-in-law dead on theirs in Cyprus. Both are night-time scenes, and every other scene occurs at night or can plausibly be shown as happening then. In the dark, dark deeds are done.

In Sam Mendes's thrilling production the nocturnal dangers are given another sinister turn of the screw by being set in enclosed spaces. Anthony Ward's permanent design of heavy wooden blinds, beyond and above a deep verandah, trap the characters as if in a cul de sac.

This sense of a psychological imprisonment is further reinforced by Paul Pyant's unnerving lighting. His shadows build up tension as powerfully as in the masterworks of German silent film. Iago's profile opens and shuts its mouth against a pillar; the shadows of an overhead fan whirl around Othello's head as he sinks irrecoverably into his madness. These are not passing tricks but the outward expression of inward states.

At three and a quarter hours the play is longer than usual. But only towards the end are the scenes, or the gaps between them, moving more slowly than feels right. Till then, paradoxically, the plot seems to hurtle. Another paradox: the speed is related to the quality of physical detail, precise and rich, that Mendes gives the scenes. Just one tiny example: a table is set with a jug of lemon juice and *more* glasses than will eventually be used. After all, how do servants know how many guests are going to be offered a drink?

Set sometime in the 1930s or 1940s — Colin Tierney's Cassio reads an old Penguin Classic — the uniforms, dresses and office furniture all make their contribution to the sober reality against which the dreadful effects of wickedness are played out. The focus is Simon Russell Beale's unforgettable Iago, spruce in his service uniform with its Sam Browne tightly holding him together. He gives his face an expression of mean cynicism while the eyes are alert to how his phrases are received. His voice makes use of the mocker's trick of evacuating breath on a word to point the follies of all pretension — and all honour too. And there is devoted sadism in his final scene with Claire Skinner's Desdemona.

With her figure delicate enough to excite the soldiery, Skinner gives us a girl whose truth of feeling never departs from her. The body may appear frail but the voice is firm: no milksop, though inexperience has set bounds to her understanding.

The speech of David Harewood's strongly built Moor emphatically separates his two characters: the spouter of rhetoric, and the man in whom "those soft parts of conversation" are so lacking that he breaks his sentences into single words. At times this becomes a mannerism but over Desdemona's dead body his voice exposes real pain. He has recovered his wits but lost his world.

JEREMY KINGSTON

DONALD COOPER



Simon Russell Beale is an unforgettable Iago, "his face an expression of mean cynicism", in the National's *Othello*

Hearts in chains

HOW little we know of how other people live, how little we know of those we have loved, and what scant attention we pay to whoever tries to shift our feelings. *Jeremy Kingston writes.* These are some of the themes Lin Coghlan's characters illustrate as they learn from each other that insularity may start as defence but can turn into a prison.

A preview on this page last week told some of the background to this pioneering co-production by the BOV, Clear Day Productions and Teatrul

With Love From Nicolae
Bristol Old Vic

Dramatic, Constanta, Romania's Black Sea port. The play is set in Constanta, partly on the seashore but mainly in the house and garden of a family whose favoured son, Nicolae, defected to England. In London his warm-heartedness permanently captivated an Irish woman, Maggie, so that long after he has left her, seemingly to return home, she reveres his memory.

Her 17-year-old son Nicky is sick of hearing about him. Reluctantly he accompanies her on a journey to discover his father's family, and in Constanta a healing and liberating process begins.

Coghlan confidently weaves allegory into her story. A dying birch tree leans to one side of Carmencita Brojboiu's magically suggestive set: planted by Nicolae, it is passionately protected by his sister, Iuliana (Monica Mihaescu). On the opposite side a hen-house perches: to relieve the hens' imprisonment Iuliana's young daughter Gabi (Medeea Marinescu) has stuck pictures on its inside walls. Metaphorical prisons have enclosed them all.

Of course Maggie's idol does not have feet of gold, but Nicola Redmond's performance shows us how anxiously she has needed such an idol. Philip Osment's direction smoothly moves the focus across the group, now gathering its members around the table, now separating them into smaller units. Liviu Manolache's music adds an other-worldly thrill.

Parables without purpose

A River Sutra
Three Mills Island Studios

YOU can't miss the sense of event that hovers like joss-stick incense over the National Theatre Studio/Indosa staging of Gita Mehta's *A River Sutra*. The venue is largely to blame. Finding this strange 18th-century warehouse on an island in the East End proves as much a pilgrimage as the Narmada River is to the characters of Mehta's novel.

Rosa Maggiora's 90ft set taps superbly into the atmospheres. A river of lights sparkles against the brickwork. A rocky bank, framed on either side by a guesthouse and a temple, dominates the space. The audience are scattered on cushions: a lucky few hog benches at the back; the unlucky many, out on wings, have terrible sightlines.

What unfolds is a series of stories that hinge around Sam Dastor's retired civil servant who owns the guesthouse. Having renounced the city in search of peace he puzzles over the mystic grip of the river, a symbol of lust and absolution. Never has renunciation seemed such a middle-class sport. Dastor's benign Hindu makes chaste small-talk with Scott Ransome's unconvincing postman. One expects cucumber sandwiches to start appearing. Instead, a Jain monk (Andrew Mallett) happens by, and we see his life story enacted as a dreamy sketch.

The monk, it transpires, has abandoned his diamond fortune to "live in the world". Suitably horrified, Dastor's civil servant consults the local wise man (Talat Hussain), who tells him the story of an impoverished musician, his nagging wife, and the discovery of a blind beggar boy with the voice of an angel. So it goes: small parables sprouting organically from the compost of Tanika Gupta's wholesome adaptation.

The Roald Dahl twists, which inspire spiritual angst in the civil servant, did little for me. It's all very pastoral, slow-moving and unbelievable. The actors rarely succeed in inhabiting their parts and the mixed casting sometimes makes Indhu Rubasingham's production look like the last days of the Raj rather than the intended celebration of religious diversity.

JAMES CHRISTOPHER

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Ulysses journeys up north

The actor David Threlfall explains his new role: a Lancastrian version of Homer's wanderer

David Threlfall has "played Greek" on stage once before, and the title of a new comedy by Richard Hope may mislead you into thinking he is about to play it again. Ten years ago, at the Manchester Royal Exchange, he was the king who kills his father and marries his mother, but the bloody catharsis of *Oedipus Rex* is a world away from his mock heroic character in Hope's *Odysseus Thump*.

Hope, writer in residence at the West Yorkshire Playhouse, has produced a kind of northern *Ulysses*, following in Joyce's footsteps by transforming an ordinary man into a 20th-century incarnation of Homer's wanderer. Instead of Leopold Bloom in Dublin, 1904, we have Norman Nestor (Threlfall) in Failsworth, Lancs, 1997.

During a weekend of reflection and heavy drinking, Norman — late fifties, unemployed and unhappily married — stumbles through a series of encounters, by turns comic and moving, with characters whose mythic equivalents are clear: a Circe-like seductress..a one-eyed football ref called Horace Clopsy.

"The parallels with Odysseus are there, and the set will reflect that Greek, mythic quality," says Threlfall. "But Richard wrote the play in homage to his late grandfather, not Homer, and in essence this is an optimistic piece about a man who realises he's reached a certain point in his life — and that realisation hits him like a truck."

While the accents and dialect of *Odysseus Thump* are Lancashire through and through, Threlfall, who grew up in Manchester, says Hope has steered clear of the brand of northern drama that tends to be "parochial and full of stupid people. You should feel that Norman's story could happen anywhere in the world."

Accent apart, Threlfall — lean, tall and, even with a full beard, looking younger than 43 — might seem an improbable choice for the hapless, overweight Norman. A strap-on beer belly will flesh him out on stage, but Jude Kelly, who is directing *Odysseus Thump* in the Playhouse's Courtyard Theatre, told him she had originally planned to cast somebody older.

However, like anyone else who remembers Threlfall as Smike, in the RSC *Nicholas Nickleby*, or as Leslie Titmus, the reptilian Tory "hero" of John Mortimer's *Paradise Postponed*, Kelly has witnessed the absolute conviction with which he can inhabit vastly different characters.

The son of a builder, he had an "unexciting" childhood in Burnage, the Manchester district Liam and Noel Gallagher also used to call home. He thought about becoming a footballer or an artist, until the lasting influence of his school drama teachers pushed him into acting.

Training at Manchester Polytechnic was followed by a role in the BBC's infamous borstal play, *Scum*. Then, in 1979, came the RSC, and Smike. Threlfall's performance as the lame, abused orphan, his body and speech heartbreakingly twisted, was astonishing. It earned him three awards at home, plus Tony and Emmy nominations for the Broadway transfer and the television recording, seen by almost two million viewers as part of Channel 4's first autumn schedule.

Married to "a wonderful woman", with whom he has a one-year-old son, he speaks slowly and quietly, and gives off an air of unshakeable calm. No wonder Ford was happy to have him exuding assurance behind the wheel of a gleaming Mondeo in its 1994 TV commercial (think moody, meaningless shots of Threlfall returning home on small ferry, intercut with *Don't Look Now*-style glimpses of little girl in red raincoat).

The equanimity does not waver when he recalls popping plastic wedges behind his ears to play Prince Charles in the NBC mini-series of *Diana: Her True Story* or his unsuccessful attempt to break into Hollywood.

"Several years ago I went to LA to have a go at sitting around the pool — which simply means waiting for that big call to come. But I was just one of thousands trying to get a break."

DENZIL McNEELANCE



David Threlfall: a career ranging from Smike in the RSC's *Nicholas Nickleby* to Hollywood thrillers

He did manage to leave his mark on two major league movies, playing Sean Connery's MI5 minder in *The Russia House*, and the hard-bitten Ulster cop murdered by Sean Bean's fugitive terrorist in *Patriot Games*.

"At my *Patriot Games* audition, I asked Philip Noyce, the director: 'Do you want a proper character — or do you just want someone to say the lines?' I can upset people by saying things like that. I don't mean to, I'm just trying to find out what's required.

"I'd love to do a film like *Shine*, something that allows an actor to put the physicality of theatre on screen. But I'd rather do a play like *Odysseus Thump* than pick up crumbs off Hollywood tables. I love being in a room with actors and working things out. I trailed home from rehearsals a few nights ago thinking 'This is where I want to be.' In my blood I'm a theatre animal."

DANIEL ROSENTHAL

● Odysseus Thump *previews at the Courtyard, West Yorkshire Playhouse, Leeds (0113 213 7700) from today*

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Reality is a loving cup of rosy Leigh

NEW MOVIES: Geoff Brown relishes the way Mike Leigh makes you care about his *Career Girls*

Student days. The domestic squalor. The unappetising meals, scraped together from onions, ketchup, anything handy. The verbal jockeying for position. The drinking. The partying. Scenes in Mike Leigh's latest film, **Career Girls**, will bring back memories for many, although you have to approach his North London Polytechnic students through an unusually thick veil of caricature.

Hannah (Katrin Cartlidge) maintains a protective barrier of low-level puns and prickly remarks. Annie, her flatmate (Lynda Steadman), is a cringing mouse with downcast eyes and a serious skin problem: "Looks like you done the tango with a cheesegrater," Hannah says. As for Ricky, the unstable, burly loafer played by Mark Benton, scarcely a word emerges without being prefaced by an "er", or a finger poked towards an eye.

The level of artifice shown in *Career Girls* takes you by surprise. After the breadth and depth of *Secrets & Lies*, Leigh seems intent on recapturing old vices: reducing people to cruel cartoons, shoving talking heads up on the screen without any regard for visual niceties.

But there is a method to Leigh's madness. These scenes are set in the past; and he paints with broad strokes to chart the difference between then and now, when Hannah and Annie meet up again as mature women of 30 with careers, quirks largely ironed out, rediscovering their relationship during one weekend in London.

Over the weekend, Hannah and Annie run into other remnants from their past. Another flatmate jogs past on Hampstead Heath; an estate agent is revealed as Adrian, a student Lothario; while Ricky is encountered, unforgettably, in severe mental disarray, clutching a toy elephant and parked on the steps by their old flat. Viewed realistically, these coincidences take some *swallowing; but they help to* bind us to the characters and encourage us to journey with them through their hopes, fears and disappointments, facing our own en route.

The tonal range is wide. Ricky's inarticulate expression of love recalls the uncomfortable mood of Leigh's first film, *Bleak Moments*. When the women pose for a lark as house-hunters, social satire comes into play: "I suppose on a clear day you can see the class struggle from here," Hannah comments from a flat high above Docklands. Whatever the tone, Cartlidge, Steadman and the rest convey it with conviction. By the end of this wayward yet touching film, Leigh's caricatures have become living people, mirrors for ourselves; and you want the best for these career girls as they make the best of their *faults and foibles*.

From Leigh's version of reality we turn to Hollywood's. Opulence and good looks everywhere. Big city glamour. Look at the celebrations in **My Best Friend's Wedding**, held on a Chicago estate garlanded with roses, balloons, bunting and the painted faces of the rich. All this plus Julia Roberts, tousled hair flowing freely. The other week, in *Conspiracy Theory*, she worked for the Justice Department. Here she pretends to be a New York food critic. But the only role she plays convincingly is Julia Roberts, megastar.

Luckily, *My Best Friend's Wedding* has more to offer than escapist opulence and the tired story of two women fighting over one man. It comes with kinks, and a larger sense of character than other recent romantic comedies. The director P.J. Hogan, the Australian who gave us *Muriel's Wedding*, is not afraid of lurching into fantasy, or giving characters a tart coating. Take Roberts herself: long the best friend of Dermot Mulroney, she boils into a rage when he decides to marry Cameron Diaz, beautiful offspring of a Chicago tycoon. Invited to the wedding, Roberts does her best to derail the journey to the altar. Spite does not make a pretty woman.

Possibly the film would have greater bite with an altered cast. Diaz cannot be faulted: she makes her wealthy bride likeable from the moment she appears at Chicago airport in a violent yellow dress, showering Roberts with hugs. With Roberts, though, we must fill out the blanks in her sculptured face to gauge her anguish and guile: the role really needs Jean Arthur, Claudette Colbert, or some other mistress of sophisticated comedy from Hollywood's Golden Age.

As for the men, Dermot Mulroney is an affable stooge, swept up in the whirlpool of women's desires. He is never a match for Rupert Everett, cast as Roberts's gay editor, who flies to Chicago to stoke the fires of jealousy by posing, improbably, as Roberts's fiancé. The role could easily have been a mincing caricature, but Everett sails through with elegance and ease, stealing every scene.



Eden Kotting and Gladys Morris on a touching and powerful trip round Britain in Eden's dad's *Gallivant*

We return to Britain for **Gallivant**, the week's most idiosyncratic and joyous movie. Since it avoids all fiction and deals with real people out and about before the camera, it could, I suppose, be labelled a documentary. But this suggests something cold and dull: and *Andrew Kotting's* first feature-length creation fairly bounces along as it follows the progress of the film-maker, his 85-year-old grandmother and seven-year-old daughter around the coast of Britain.

They start at Bexhill-on-Sea's De La Warr Pavilion. Then they move clockwise, down to Cornwall, up to Cumbria for a spirited performance of *D'Ye Ken John Peel*, across and over to John o'Groat's, down to Middlesbrough, circling round to Kent and Sussex, where they meet a café owner who has removed his table tops because people's cups kept leaving marks.

Kotting has an eye for the eccentric. He is no sobersides himself, and likes to lark about with his camera. But beyond the frisky surface, punctured by landscapes and clouds scudding by in fast motion, lies a strong and vibrant human core. Kotting's daughter Eden has Joubert's syndrome, which restricts her communication to sign language and will probably curtail her life. His grandmother Gladys appears indomitable, armed with blunt words and a teacosy hat, knitted for Christmas by a neighbour. But we are made gently aware of the differing frailties of young and old, and the need to forge bonds and understanding before too much time passes.

Ironically, the only member of the trio who comes to harm is Kotting himself, who shatters an ankle. But the viewer feels in safe hands as he steers us through family drama, sociology, geography, and unusual poetry. *Gallivant* is a real tonic: it warms the heart, *stimulates the eye and brain*, and opens up new paths for British cinema.

Photographing Fairies, another British film helped by lottery money, contains striking sights, but is likely to send audiences home scratching their heads. The hero is wildly unsympathetic: a photographer, bereaved on his honeymoon in 1913, who becomes obsessed with a belief in fairies. Possibly if we shared his grief we could understand *what drives him on; as the film* stands, neither the script nor Toby Stephens's performance allows us intimacy. The images of John de Borman are frequently luscious and lively, but director Nick Willing, experienced at commercials and music videos, cannot shape the material into anything entertaining or edifying.

Deep Crimson, from Mexico's leading director Arturo Ripstein, suggests more grim times ahead: what fun can you *get from an overweight nurse* and a seedy gigolo exploiting, then murdering, vulnerable widows and spinsters? In fact, Ripstein's controlling hand and an exemplary cast headed by Daniel Giminez-Cacho and Regina Orozco provide morbid amusement in plenty. Ripstein is a master at moody melodramas and love stories gone wrong, and this story spotlights all his strengths.

Career Girls
Curzon West End
15, 87 mins
Modest, wayward and touching Mike Leigh

My Best Friend's Wedding
Warner West End
12, 105 mins
Can Julia Roberts also be funny?

Gallivant
Everyman, *15, 103 mins*
New blood for British cinema

Photographing Fairies
Empire, *15, 106 mins*
Good images, bad drama

Deep Crimson
Metro, *18, 114 mins*
Morbid entertainment from Mexico



Lynda Steadman and Katrin Cartlidge in Mike Leigh's *Career Girls*, a film very different from *Secrets & Lies*, but equally impressive in its own way

SNAP VERDICT

Every week, young film fans discuss the latest releases . . .

■ ***CAREER GIRLS***
Leslie Isaiah Thomas, 19: As profound and insightful as *Secrets & Lies*. No other director portrays our nation so truthfully.
Dominic Young, 18: The performances are complex and accomplished. Go see it!
Laura Brook, 19: Great entertainment. At once funny and sad.
Eleanor Zeal, 18: You're going to love it!

■ ***MY BEST FRIEND'S WEDDING***
Leslie: The director of *Muriel's Wedding* comes up with another movie containing an odd mix of comedy and drama.
Dominic: Rupert Everett is good, but blink and you'll miss him. Julia Roberts looks very uncomfortable: perhaps she was required to act.
Laura: This just about qualifies as a comedy, but there was an odd, cruel edge to it.
Eleanor: Rather disappointing: a comedy with few laughs.

■ ***PHOTOGRAPHING FAIRIES***
Leslie: A clumsy screenplay with bad directing and bad acting.
Dominic: It just seemed never to end.
Laura: Long and boring. Virtually all the actors' performances were big and stagey.
Eleanor: A beautifully photographed movie with nothing else to recommend it.

NEW ON VIDEO

ASHES AND DIAMONDS
Eureka, 18, 1958
ANDRZEJ WAJDA'S unplanned trilogy about his own generation of Polish youth reached a striking conclusion with this famous drama about a nationalist underground operative (Zbigniew Cybulski) sent to assassinate a Communist leader in the days following the Second World War. But this is no simple period film: Cybulski's dark glasses and disillusionment made him a rebel hero, while Wajda's forceful, expressionist style left realism far behind.

BOX OF MOONLIGHT
First Independent, 15, 1996
JOHN TURTURRO, an overmeticulous electrical engineer, discovers the wonders of anarchy and the open road with a free spirit called the Kid (Sam Rockwell). Tom DiCillo's philosophical road movie tries too hard for goofy comedy and winsome charm, but there are many incidental pleasures en route. Available to rent.

THE CRUCIBLE
Fox Guild, 12, 1996
EARNESTNESS taints Nicholas Hytner's attempt to film Arthur Miller's play about 17th-century witchcraft. As Abigail, the girl who spreads the witchcraft rumours in Salem, Massachusetts, Winona Ryder tries hard, but always seems a modern girl in period clothes, and never connects with Daniel Day-Lewis, the farmer who enjoyed her favours. The temperature rises with Paul Scofield, cast as the trial judge. But his caressing of the text only underlines the material's best home: the theatre. Available to rent.

THE LITTLE SHOP OF HORRORS
Orbit, PG, 1960
"FEED me, feeeeeed me!" cries the exotic plant hatched in Mushnik's flower shop on Skid Row. So its hapless creator (Jonathan Haze) keeps up a supply of the best food available: people. Roger Corman's loopy black comedy was shot in two days, mostly on a single set, but the script and performances are so bright that the time restrictions never cause damage.

STAR TREK
FIRST CONTACT
CIC, 15, 1996
PATRICK STEWART battles the Borgs, who threaten to muck up history by barging in on Earth in the year 2063, and assimilating many of the *Enterprise* crew as they cruise the Universe. This second vehicle for the cast of *Star Trek: The Next Generation* is an acceptable adventure, with grandiose sights and sleek special effects, but not much sense of fun. Jonathan Frakes (Commander Riker) directs. Available to rent.

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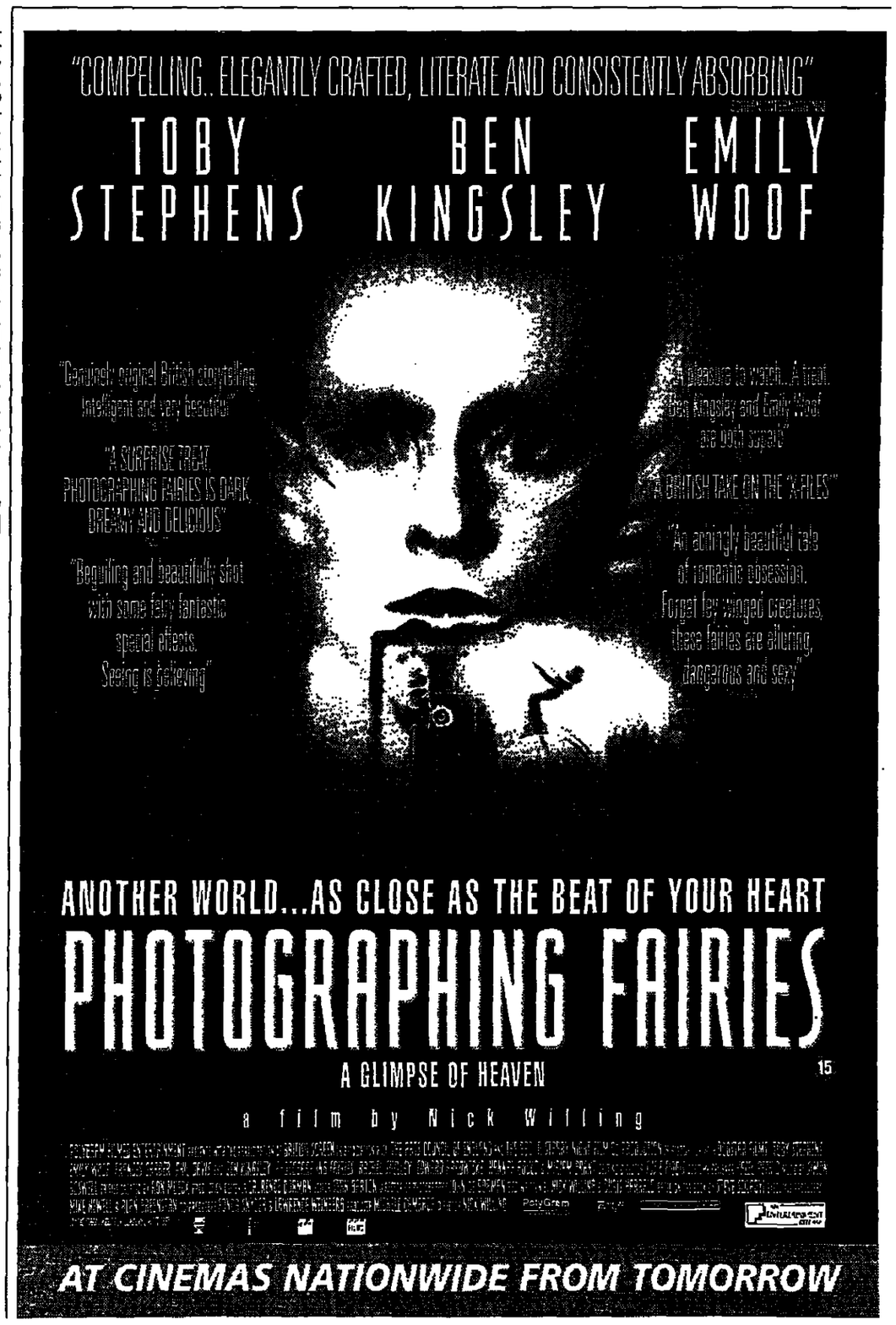
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LONDON

ENTER THE GUARDSMAN: Musical version of Ferenc Molnar's comedy of Viennese manners where an actor and actress, perfectly matched onstage, live a very different life at home. With Janie Dee and Alexander Hanson; music and lyrics by Craig Bohmler and Marion Adler, directed by Jeremy Sams
Donmar Warehouse, Earlham Street, WC2 (0171-369 1732) Mon-Sat. 7.30pm; mats Wed and Sat, 3pm

LES ARTS FLORISSANTS: The acclaimed Baroque group under its director William Christie opens the autumn classical music season with a weekend devoted to Baroque theatre, music and dance. On tonight's programme are semi-staged performances of two chamber operas by Charpentier, *Les Plaisirs de Versailles* and *La Descente d'Orphée aux enfers*
Barbican, Silk Street, EC2 (0171-638 8891) Tonight, 7.30pm

A MAN IN A ROOM, GAMBLING: The minimalist British composer Gavin Bryars and the Gavin Bryars Ensemble team up with the Spanish sculptor and illusionist Juan Muñoz for the composer's latest work, a series of short compositions based on card tricks
BBC Maida Vale Studio One Delaware Road, W9 (0171-336 8803) Tonight, tomorrow and Sat, 8pm.

THE MIKADO: David Rich's revival for English National Opera of Jonathan Miller's updated version of Gilbert and Sullivan's mock-Japanese satire on all things English. Richard Angas returns as the menacing Mikado in a cast which includes Bonaventura Bottone and Jane Kelly. Michael Rosewell conducts
Coliseum St Martin's Lane, WC2 (0171-632 8300) Tonight, 7.30pm

ELSEWHERE

DARTFORD: The City Ballet of London begins its autumn tour here tonight with the world premiere of its new production of **The Sleeping Beauty** Award-winning choreographer Michael Rolnick's neo-classical interpretation of the fairy-tale takes its inspiration from Tchaikovsky's glorious score, highlighting the magic of the story as well as the psychological elements at its core.
Orchard Theatre, Home Gardens (01322 220000). Tonight-Sat. 7.45pm; mat Sat, 2.30pm

LEEDS: David Threlfall plays the wanderer in Richard Hope's **Odysseus Tiumph**. After being dropped from his pub football team, our hero visits old haunts in search of reassurance. Jude Kelly directs. See interview, page 38.
West Yorkshire Playhouse, The Quarry, Hill Mount (0113-244 2111). Previews from tonight, 7.45pm. Opens Sept 24. 7.45pm Then Mon-Sat, 7.45pm; Mats Wed (Oct 8, 15), 2pm. Sat (Sep 27, Oct 4, 25), 3pm.

MANCHESTER: Josie Lawrence and Michael Mueller play the bickering Beatrice and Benedick, whose unadmitted love is the matter of **Much Ado About Nothing**. Helena Kaut-Howson's strong cast includes Ewan Hooper as Leonato.
Royal Exchange, St Ann's Square, (0161-833 9833) Previews from tonight, 7.30pm. Opens Sept 23, 7.30pm. Then Mon-Sat, 7.30pm; mats Wed and Sat, 2.30pm. Until November 1.

NORWICH: Followers of English folk music are in for a treat tonight as Waterson:Carthy, Britain's most feted folk family, arrive here for a meeting evening of music from two of their highly acclaimed albums
Norwich Arts Centre, Reeves Yard, St Benedict's Street, (01603 660352). Tonight, 8pm.



Norma Waterson and family plays in Norwich

TODAY'S CHOICE

A daily guide to arts and entertainment compiled by Marti Hargie

LONDON GALLERIES

Anthony d'Offay: Richard Patterson (0171-499 4100) . . . **Barbican:** Don McCullin: Sleeping with Ghosts (0171-638 8891) . . . **Chris Beetles:** Muriel Pemberton: An English Colourist (0171-839 7551) . . . **Hart:** John Hartman: New Paintings (0171-704 1131) . . . **Llewellyn Alexander:** Ron Bone and Austin Moseley (0171-620 1322) . . . **Museum of London:** In Royal Fashion (0171-600 0807) . . . **National.** Rembrandt: The Blinding of Samson (0171-747 2885) . . . **Royal Academy:** Sensation: Young British Artists from the Saatchi Collection (0171-439 7438) . . . **Tate:** Beat Streuli (0171-887 8000) . . . **Whitechapel:** David Allaro Siqueiros (0171-522 7888)

THEATRE GUIDE

Jeremy Kingston's assessment of theatre showing in London

■ **House full, returns only**
◪ **Some seats available**
☐ **Seats at all prices**

☐ **ART:** Henry Goodman, Roger Allam and Stanley Townsend in this exceptionally interesting drama about friendship, unspoken resentment and an almost all-white painting
Wyndham's, Charing Cross Road, WC2 (0171-369 1736) Mon-Sat, 8pm, mats Wed, 3pm, Sat, 5pm

◪ **BEAUTY AND THE BEAST:** Disney's film turned into a hit Broadway musical. Julie-Alanah Brighten and Alasdair Harvey as the leads, with support from the likes of Derek Griffiths and Norman Pace
Dominion, Tottenham Court Road, W1 (0171-416 6060) Mon-Sat, 7.30pm, mat Sat, 2.30pm

☐ **THE BIBLE: THE COMPLETE WORD OF GOD (ABRIDGED):** Another compression job by the Reduced Shakespeare Company, said to put the fun back into fundamentalism
Gielgud, Shaftesbury Avenue, W1 (0171-494 5065). Mon-Sat, 8pm, mats Wed, 3pm, Sat, 5pm.

◪ **A CHASTE MAID IN CHEAPSIDE:** Ironic title for Middleton's funniest comedy: greed, lust and just a touch of love. Mark Rylance plays Allwit, the contented cuckold.
Globe, New Globe Walk, SE1 (0171-316 4703). Tonight, 7.30

☐ **DO YOU COME HERE OFTEN?** The Right Size (Sean Foley and Hamish McColl) follow their excellent *Stop Calling Me Vernon* with this new comic show. The characters are accidentally locked in a bathroom, and all their attempts at escape are thwarted
Lyric Studio, King Street, Hammersmith, W6 (0181-741 2311). Mon-Sat, 8pm, mat Sat, 4.30pm

☐ **THE HERBAL BED:** Peter Whelan's fascinating play. Kate Duchêne plays Shakespeare's daughter and Michael Ford plays her physician husband.
Duchess, Catherine Street, WC2 (0171-494 5075) Mon-Sat, 7.30pm; mats Wed and Sat, 2.30pm. Until October 4

☐ **AN IDEAL HUSBAND:** Return of Peter Hall's enjoyable production, brimful of deceptions. Starring Martin Shaw and Simon Ward, and Kate O'Mara as the svelte troublemaker
Theatre Royal, Haymarket, SW1 (0171-930 8800). Mon-Sat, 7.45pm; mats Thurs, 3pm, Sat, 4pm. Until October 11.

☐ **LIFE SUPPORT:** Alan Bates subtly moving in Simon Gray's play about remorse for marital treachery
Aldwych, The Aldwych, WC2 (0171-416 6003). Mon-Sat, 8pm; mats Wed and Sat, 2.30pm.

PLAYHOUSE CREATURES: Set backstage at the time of Charles II, April de Angelis's play shows the life and troubled times of the first English actresses, including Nell Gwynne. Lynne Parker directs a cast led by Saskia Reeves and Sheila Gish
Old Vic, Waterloo Road, SE1 (0171-928 7616). Previews Sep 14, 8pm. Opens Sep 15, 7.30pm. In rep.

☐ **PYGMALION:** Amusing, unshowy revival with Roy Marsden, Michael Elphick, and newcomer Carli Morris
Albery, St Martin's Lane, WC2 (0171-369 1730) Mon-Sat, 8pm; mats Thurs, 3pm, Sat, 4.30pm.

☐ **SKYLIGHT:** Bill Nighy and Stella Gonet in David Hare's witty and cogent play showing two contemporary social moralities at odds. Richard Eyre directs
Vaudeville, Strand, WC2 (0171-836 9987) Mon-Sat, 8pm, mats Wed and Sat, 3pm

☐ **THE WASP FACTORY:** Successful stage version of the sinister cult novel by Iain Banks, adapted and directed by Malcolm Sutherland. First seen at West Yorkshire Playhouse. Terrific sets.
Lyric, King Street, Hammersmith, W6 (0181-741 2311) Mon-Fri, 8.30pm; Sat, 7pm and 9.30pm. Until October 18.

LONG RUNNERS

☐ **Blood Brothers:** Phoenix (0171-369 1733) . . . ☐ **Buddy:** Strand (0171-930 8800) . . ◪ **Cats:** New London (0171-405 0072) . . . ☐ **The Complete Works of William Shakespeare (Abridged).** Criterion (0171-369 1737) . . . ■ **Les Misérables:** Palace (0171-434 0909) . . ◪ **Miss Saigon.** Drury Lane (0171-494 5400) . . . ☐ **The Mousetrap:** St Martin's (0171-836 1443) . . . ☐ **Smokey Joe's Cafe:** Prince of Wales (0171-839 5987) . . . ☐ **Starlight Express:** Apollo Victoria (0171-416 6054)

Ticket information supplied by Society of London Theatre

NEW RELEASES

◆ **AIR FORCE ONE** (15) President Harrison Ford gets hijacked preposterous, old-fashioned fun, with Gary Oldman and Glenn Close. Director, Wolfgang Petersen
ABCs: Baker Street (0171-935 9772) **Tottenham Court Road** (0171-636 6148) **Notting Hill Coronet** ◪ (0171-727 6705) **Odeons: Camden Town** (0181-315 4255) **Kensington** (0181-315 4214) **Leicester Square** (0181-315 4215) **Marble Arch** (0181-315 4216) **Swiss Cottage** (0181-315 4220) **UCI Whiteleys** ◪ (0990 888990) **Virgin Fulham Road** (0171-370 2636)

◆ **ONE EIGHT SEVEN** (15). Meek teacher versus sociopathic pupils. Over-excited drama, with Samuel L. Jackson. Director, Kevin Reynolds.
ABC Shaftesbury Avenue (0171-836 6279) **UCI Whiteleys** ◪ (0990 888990) **Virgin Fulham Road** (0171-370 2636) **Warner** ◪ (0171-437 4343)

THE WATERMELON WOMEN: Frisky tale of an aspiring black film-maker, written by, directed by, and starring, Cheryl Dunye
ICA ◪ (0171-930 3647)

CURRENT

◆ **THE FULL MONTY** (15): Unemployed steelworkers strip for cash. Bouncy British comedy, with Robert Carlyle, Tom Wilkinson, Mark Addy. Director, Peter Cattaneo.
Clapham Picture House (0171-498 3323) **Greenwich** (0181-235 3005) **Odeons: Camden Town** (0181-315 4255) **Kensington** (0181-315 4214) **Marble Arch** (0181-315 4216) **Swiss Cottage** (0181-315 4220) **West End** (0181-315 4221) **Ritzy** (0171-737 2121) **Screen/Baker Street** (0171-935 2772) **Screen/Green** (0171-226 3520) **UCI Whiteleys** ◪ (0990 888990) **Virgin Chelsea** (0171-352 5096)

◆ **GROSSE POINTE BLANK** (15). Troubled hit man hits his class reunion. Hip comedy with John Cusack, Minnie Driver and Dan Aykroyd. Director, George Armitage
ABC Piccadilly Street (0171-930 0631) **Odeon Camden Town** (0181-315 4255) **Plaza** ◪ (0990 888990) **Ritzy** (0171-737 2121) **Virgin Chelsea** (0171-352 5096) **Warner West End** (0171-437 4343)

◆ **LADY AND THE TRAMP** (U) Disney's 1955 cartoon revived: bland, but with a faint canine charm.
Odeon Swiss Cottage (0181-315 4220) **UCI Whiteleys** (0990 888990)

LOST HIGHWAY (18): Striking but insular David Lynch conundrum, with Bill Pullman and Patricia Arquette
Curzon West End (0171-369 1722) **Odeon Camden Town** (0181-315 4255) **Ritzy** (0171-737 2121)

◆ **MEN IN BLACK** (PG) Hip blockbuster about aliens in Manhattan, with Tommy Lee Jones and Will Smith. Director, Barry Sonnenfeld
ABC Tottenham Court Road (0171-636 6148) **Odeons: Kensington** (0181-315 4214) **Marble Arch** (0181-315 4216) **Swiss Cottage** (0181-315 4220) **Ritzy** (0171-737 2121) **Virgin: Chelsea** (0171-352 5096) **Fulham Road** (0171-370 2636) **Trocadero** ◪ (0171-434 0031) **Warner** ◪ (0171-437 4343)

◆ **MRS BROWN** (PG) Queen Victoria's relationship with her servant John Brown. Focused, subtle drama, with Judi Dench and Billy Connolly. Director, John Madden
Barbican ◪ (0171-638 8891) **Chelsea** (0171-351 3742) **Clapham Picture House** (0171-498 3323) **Curzon Mayfair** (0171-369 1720) **Greenwich** (0181-235 3005) **Odeons: Camden Town** (0181-315 4255) **Haymarket** (0181-315 4212) **Kensington** (0181-315 4214) **Richmond** (0181-332 0030) **Ritzy** (0171-737 2121) **Screen/Baker Street** (0171-935 2772) **Screen/Hill** ◪ (0171-435 3366) **UCI Whiteleys** ◪ (0990 888990) **Virgin Fulham Road** (0171-370 2636) **Warner** ◪ (0171-437 4343)

NIGHT FALLS ON MANHATTAN (15): Idealistic DA faces conflicting loyalties. Absorbing drama from director Sidney Lumet, with Andy Garcia, Ian Holm, and Lena Olin.
ABC Tottenham Court Road (0171-636 6148) **Odeons: Camden Town** (0181-315 4255) **Kensington** (0181-315 4214) **Swiss Cottage** (0181-315 4220) **Ritzy** (0171-737 2121) **Virgin Haymarket** (0171-839 1527) **Warner** ◪ (0171-437 4343)

CINEMA GUIDE

Geoff Brown's assessment of films in London and (where indicated with the symbol ◆) on release across the country

Tongue-tied in the house of a master

In a third extract from *Solti on Solti* the great conductor is overcome by nerves as he joins Richard Strauss for a memorable lunch

ROS DRINKWATER



Sir Georg Solti: "Strauss's advice has guided me through my career"

I met Richard Strauss only a few times, but he had a great influence on my professional life. Strauss had spent the immediate postwar years in Switzerland, where he composed his Four Last Songs, but he returned to his home in Garmisch, in the Bavarian Alps, shortly before his 85th birthday, on June 11, 1949. By then, I was music director of the Bavarian State Opera.

In honour of Strauss's homecoming, the Staatsoper put on a new production of *Der Rosenkavalier*. Strauss, whose health was frail, declined to attend the public performances, but he let us know that he would come to the dress rehearsal.

As a conductor first diving into this vast score, one feels absolutely lost in the mass of sound and action. If I had to do my first *Rosenkavalier* today with the composer in the audience, I would die of fear.

During the intermission between the second and third acts at that dress rehearsal a short news documentary was filmed, showing Strauss conducting for a few minutes. I have a copy of the film; and today it amazes me to see myself — a young man, with hair — standing behind the elderly composer, who was born more than 130 years ago. As I brought him into the pit, he said to the orchestra, "Good morning, gentlemen." He then sat down and I stood behind him. He asked me, "Where are the horns sitting?"

"The horns are on the left, the trumpets on the right, Dr Strauss."

"I can no longer see or hear very well," he said. Then an astonishing thing happened: as soon as he began to conduct, the feebleness of old age was replaced with power and control. He began with the waltz at the end of the second act. Just before Ochs's musical entrance, Strauss, though nearly blind, automatically looked up at the stage and gave a cue with the instinctive assurance of a seasoned *Kapellmeister*.

Shortly afterwards, I went to Garmisch to accompany a violinist in a performance of Strauss's Violin and Piano Sonata, in a small concert being given to celebrate his 85th birthday. When we had finished, Strauss said to me, "Come and visit me. I would like to talk to you." Two or three weeks later, I visited him at his home, and I brought along three scores: *Der Rosenkavalier*, *Elektra* and *Salome*.

When I rang the bell, the door was opened not by a servant but by Strauss himself. He took me into the room where he worked, overlooking the well-kept garden of his villa and the distant mountains. His work table was in front of the window, and it was hard to imagine that these tranquil, orderly, bourgeois surroundings had been the birthplace of his two most violent operas, *Salome* and *Elektra*.

I stood there tongue-tied, clutching my scores. He sensed my nervousness and, to put me at my ease, he asked me to sit down and tell him the latest gossip at the opera. His tactic worked: because we were trading gossip, I lost my fear of him. In short, he treated me like a colleague, and I quickly overcame my shyness.

I asked Strauss how certain tempi in *Rosenkavalier* ought to be performed: he gave me an all-purpose answer. "It's very easy," he said. "I set Hofmannsthal's text at the pace at which I would speak it, with a natural speed and in a natural rhythm. Just recite the text and you will find the right tempi."



"Strauss put me at my ease and treated me like a colleague"

Strauss had a unique talent for setting words. He told me to conduct the waltz in one beat to the bar, not in three. "Don't do what Clemens Krauss so often does," he said. "He beats the waltz in three. Try to stay in one. This makes the phrasing more natural." This is, of course, much more difficult, but I've always tried to follow his advice.

Apart from these comments on the tempi in *Rosenkavalier*, he did not want to discuss his own music. He asked me, "Do you know *Tristan*?"

"Yes, I've conducted it," I said.

"Then tell me why, in the last chord, all the instruments play except the cors anglais."

That is true: even the harp plays the last chord, but the cors anglais drops out for the last three bars, in B major. I couldn't tell him why.

"The cors anglais represents the love potion," he said, "and by the last chord, when both Tristan and Isolde are dead, the effects of the potion have ended."

I later reported the story to my dear friend Willi Schuch, the musicologist and critic who had "discovered" me in Zurich a few years earlier, and who was Strauss's friend and biographer. "Oh, don't take it badly," Schuch told me. "He likes to trick everyone by asking that question."

That day I spent about two and a half hours with Strauss, including lunch, for which his wife joined us. The daughter of a general, she was known in her youth as the soprano Pauline de Ahna. Strauss had dedicated many songs to her, both before and after their marriage. She was famous for being strict and difficult, and to the end of her husband's life she used to say, "I have made a *mésalliance*. I should have married an officer, not a composer."

While we were at table, Strauss asked me, "*Warum fuchteln Sie so, wenn Sie dirigieren?*" (Why do you wave your arms around so much when you conduct?) "You beat too much and your gestures are far too big."

Frau Strauss immediately said, "Richard, you know perfectly well that you gesticulated terribly when you were young. The doctor even said you might damage your heart."

"Yes, it's absolutely true," he admitted, laughing. Everyone knows that the mature Strauss was a model of economy in his conducting gestures. He must have been quite wild as a young man. Immediately after lunch, Frau Strauss said, abruptly, "Young man, you must go now. Richard must take a nap."

He courageously protested. "Oh, don't send him away yet. Just a little bit more time. I want to put some little drops of wisdom into him." I remember those words precisely. But she was insistent, and so I said goodbye.

"Do come back in September," Strauss said. "We can talk some more." In particular, he wanted to talk about Mozart, and I would have loved to hear what he had to say about *Figaro*, which was his favourite opera, and *Così fan tutte*, which he was known to have conducted brilliantly. But he had a heart attack a few weeks later and died on September 8.

I conducted at his funeral. As he had requested in his will, the music was the final trio from *Der Rosenkavalier*. Afterwards, Frau Strauss came over to thank me. She was heavily veiled, and the proud general's daughter had turned into a broken, weeping old woman. She did not last long after, unable to live without her beloved Richard.

A few years ago, when I was conducting Strauss's *Die Frau ohne Schatten* at the Salzburg Festival, I saw Strauss's grandson. As we sat talking in a friend's garden, he told me that after the war his grandfather had despaired for the future of German opera houses, most of which were in ruins and the rest of which were an artistic and administrative shambles. He thought this was the end — and in a sense it was, because the old German lyric theatre tradition died out within the following decade. But he told his family, after my visit to Garmisch, "This young man gives me a little hope."

I hadn't known what he said at the time, but I was delighted to hear it 45 years later. I think Strauss must have sensed my enthusiasm and determination to do as much as I could, as well as I could. But I regret very much that my time with him was so short, because his advice has been a guide for me throughout my entire career.

● *Extracted from* Solti on Solti, *published by Chatto & Windus*

EVENTS

WE would all like to wish Pelmark every success in their new premises and a special thanks to Jane Foley for choosing the nine of clubs, regards Howard

EXHIBITIONS

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The boys are back in gowns

DANCE

Les Ballets Trockadero
Peacock

There are times when classical ballet just begs to be parodied. Who can watch the *four cygnets* in Act II of *Swan Lake* without marvelling at their potential hilarity? Who can follow the fantastic scenarios of many a 19th-century Russian ballet and not wonder at the absurdity of their storytelling? The artifice and convention of dance's "high art" leave it ripe for affectionate send-up. And no one knows this better than the all-male Ballets Trockadero de Monte Carlo.

They have been spoofing the form ever since 1974 when a group of ballet enthusiasts got together in New York to present "a playful, entertaining view of classical ballet in parody form and en travesti". They started life "in the late-late shows in Off-Off Broadway lofts"; 23 years later they are an international fixture, sending audiences all over the world into fits of giggles. They have danced with Shirley MacLaine, with Kermit and Miss Piggy; the Japanese love them so much they have to visit Japan each and every year to meet the demand.

The minute these hefty blokes put on tutus and pointe shoes they get a laugh — broad shoulders, hairy chests and big galumphing feet are not the usual attributes of a world-class ballerina. But the Trocks don't rely on cheap effect for their humour. There are pratfalls and pile-ups, silly faces and slapstick — the usual stuff of farce. Yet the 13 men also get out there and dance steps as the choreographer intended — well, almost — pirouetting fearlessly on pointe with all the conviction of a true ballerina.

Vanya Verikosa (Brian Norris in real life) certainly believes she is the world's greatest Odette, God's gift to both Siegfried and the stage. Wearing a ferocious grin defined by lurid red lips, and with feet like seal flippers, she transforms Ivanov's beautiful and mournful heroine into a grotesque, come-hither-eyed tart. Around her prance a corps de ballet of six swans, a vicious pack of fractious birds no prince would want to encounter. And the can-canning cygnets are just as delightfully daft as you imagined they could be.

The Trocks perform all of Act II of *Swan Lake*: it is their signature work. And unlike Matthew Bourne, who famously gender-bent *Swan Lake* for his own artistic ends, the Trocks are, in a roundabout way, balletomanes paying homage to the past. How many other companies have *Esmeralda* and *Paquita* in their repertoire these days? The boys of the Trocks love their Russian ballet, and they *know their ballerinas* (and, indeed, mimic their favourites shamelessly), but the secret of their success is that they can play to insiders and novices alike. You don't need to get the joke to appreciate the humour.

Sometimes you can even forget they are men. Margeaux Mundeyn (Yonny Manaure), for instance, gave us an Esmeralda so wondrously modest on Tuesday night that just for a moment you could believe you were seeing the real thing.

Petipa's *Paquita*, which closed the evening, shows how much standards of performance have improved since the Trocks last appeared in London in 1988. They put their stronger technique to good use in the virtuosic choreography, although I don't suppose anyone in the audience really noticed. They were too busy chuckling at Roland Deaulin's (it helps to say the name out loud) hilariously soused Cavalier and Fifi Barkova's wickedly accurate Ballerina (at least I think I guessed whom she was lampooning). The names on their passports, by the way, are David Tetrault and Manolo Molina. And, yes, they did get flowers at the end, handed out by someone *named Darcey Bussell*.

DEBRA CRAINE



DEE CONWAY

Les Ballets Trockadero de Monte Carlo in action on Tuesday: "The minute these hefty blokes put on tutus and pointe shoes they get a laugh"

The veteran is still the best

RECITAL

Peter Schreier
Wigmore Hall

PETER SCHREIER, a senior jury member at the weekend's International Song Competition, laid himself open to judgment only two days later in a recital accompanied by the jury's chairman, Graham Johnson.

One day we shall be convinced that Schreier is not eternal, but for the time being this elder statesman of Lieder sings on with the voice sounding younger and healthier the longer the evening progresses.

Schrier's secret, at 62, is one which singers a third his age seem reluctant to learn. Every one who entered the competition should have been compelled to stay on for the German tenor's recital. They would have learnt that the ear must be as alert as the composer's own to every flicker of the poetry's pulse, and realised just how hard the imagination must work in order to fine-tune the voice and control both it and the audience.

Schreier sang Schumann's *Dichterliebe* cycle like a man in his prime — which, of course, he is not. But the scaling of the voice's own shifting colours and capabilities to the expressive contours of the music can create a new perfection: in his case, the articulation of emotional fragility, of lightly inflected speech raised gently into song, of eloquent silences pierced by shafts of pain.

The pianist, of course, is part of the conspiracy. And in every thrilling second of this performance, Johnson was Schreier's alter ego, tormented by the relentless rhythm of the wedding dance, refracting the light of Heine's summer morning to surround one song's simple melody, only to break with the heel-click of reality into the total isolation of the soul in dream.

The second half of the evening seemed like an impromptu Schubertiad, with well-known yet shrewdly chosen songs of fugitive moods, of breath minutely threaded through words into melody. The ever-sharp blade of Schreier's tenor honed itself against every racing note of *Rastlose Liebe*, only to find total stillness in the perfectly controlled single soul-breath of Goethe's *Wanderers Nachtlied*.

HILARY FINCH

Painting over the cracks

OPERA

Norma
Glasgow

Scottish Opera opened its season on Tuesday to the smell of fresh paint: its home, the Theatre Royal, is being refurbished thanks to grants from the Scottish Arts Council, the National Lottery, Historic Scotland and — I trust I haven't missed anyone out — Glasgow City Council. Gone is the dusty chocolate, and all is now a cheerful riot of cream, claret and gold, or will be when it is all finished.

What happened on stage was slightly less cheerful. *Norma* is inextricably associated with "great singing", from Pasta, who created the title role, down to Callas, Sutherland and Caballé. Scottish Opera's four-year-old production was mounted for Jane Eaglen. If you can't cast it with great divas, or reasonable facsimiles thereof, is it wise for a company to stage it? To quote Buster Keaton, "pass".

Neither Penelope Walmsley-Clark (Norma) nor Anne Mason (Adalgisa) is blessed with a conventionally beautiful voice; both tired towards the end, and their tone grew increasingly strident. Walmsley-Clark has a commanding presence and a strong profile; she went through the motions efficiently, without quite achieving the heroic scale for the big scenery-chewing moments. Mason really believed in what she was doing, and acted from the heart.

Here, at least, were two good singers doing as best they could, and that was infinitely preferable to the Pollione (Daniel Muñoz) and Oroveso (Danilo Rigosa), who bawled at a steady fortissimo in the worst tradition of the Italian provinces, and gestured accordingly in a depressing demonstration of the art of coarse operatic performance.

This was in sad contrast to the signals emanating from the pit, whence that experienced Bellini conductor Julian Smith led a consistently absorbing musical performance, conjuring a real sense of drama out of the home-spun melodies. Not even the simplest accompaniment figure escaped his attention: everything was carefully, lovingly shaded, especially the sustained notes under pizzicatos or arpeggios. The orchestra responded with a will, and the chorus almost too lustily; Smith certainly found the violence in a score we think of as all moonlight and mistletoe.

The same is true of Ian Judge's crisply organised production, in decor by John Gunter and Deirdre Clancy full of strong colours. The sets regrouped into new locations more often than strictly necessary: why should Pollione be in such a hurry to leave his well-appointed study, complete with Julius Caesar in relief? Because he should, of course, be lurking in the Druids' temple at that point. It was either that or the curious alienating device of having stagehands periodically march on to shift the furniture around.

The main thing is, the audience was gripped by the work, by the tunes, by the scene when Norma decides not to kill her children (which can't fail), and by her public confession of guilt. So in the end Buster Keaton's "pass" won't quite do. The answer has to be, sort of, "yes".

RODNEY MILNES

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■ **BELLINI**
La sonnambula
Orgonasova/Gimenez/Ellero d'Artegna/Netherlands Radio Chamber Orch/Zedda
Naxos 8.660042-43
(two CDs) ★★ *£11.99*
THIS can lay claim to being the purest of *bel canto* operas, one reason why many singers avoid it. The vocal line is cruelly exposed for long stretches. And opera houses are wary of the wafer-thin plot concerning the habit of the heroine, Amina, of sleepwalking over dangerous rooftops and rickety bridges. So all credit to Naxos for this concert performance with the Slovakian soprano, Luba Orgonasova, giving a star display as Amina.

She begins cautiously and her opening declaration of joy could do with more verve. But she grows rapidly with the opera, and full vocal fireworks are delivered in best Bellini style.

Raúl Giménez turns in one of his most graceful characterisations as Elvino, and he too displays plenty of musical flourish as he doubts Amina's fidelity. When things are going better he and Orgonasova weave their voices around each other with the most delicate thread.

ORCHESTRAL
Barry Millington

■ **SHOSTAKOVICH**
Symphony No 5; Chamber Symphony Op 110a
Vienna PO/Jansons
EMI CDC 5 56442 2 ★★★
£15.99
JUST what Shostakovich meant by the phrase "a Soviet artist's creative reply to just criticism", in relation to his Fifth Symphony, we cannot be sure. But it is certain that the work cannot be understood without reference to ironic undercurrents.

Mariss Jansons begins his account with such silky, smooth string playing from the Vienna Philharmonic that one wonders at first whether it is all too sleek. But then, as the tempo increases at the entry of the piano, a sinister element creeps in with the rasping horns, and things appear in a different light.

The second movement has just the right sense of insouciance, of a rebellious spirit cloaked in open-air bonhomie. The finale sets off at a cracking pace, but concludes with as brutally forced a sense of "jubilation" as one could wish to hear.

The coupling is the Chamber Symphony Op 110a, Rudolf Barshai's orchestral arrangement of the dark-hued Eighth String Quartet.

VOCAL
Hilary Finch

■ **SCHUBERT**
Die schöne Müllerin
Skovhus/Deutsch
Sony SK 63075 ★★★ *£15.49*
THE Danish baritone Bo Skovhus has conscientiously done his homework, as every singer of *Die schöne Müllerin* must do as the market becomes ever more flooded with recordings. His scrutiny of sources, including Schubert's autograph manuscript, seems to have made him particularly sensitive to the shifting qualities of movement both within and between songs.

As the tale of the lovelorn miller's apprentice opens, a brisk and buoyant jogging movement is set up in Skovhus's well-toned baritone, modulating to a gentle, rippling flow of breath and articulation in the second song. Skovhus's own meticulously observed rhythmic details are unified by the pianist Helmut Deutsch, a wise veteran of this cycle.

A quick, impulsive move from the cycle's temporary resting-place in the song *Pause* — as the protagonist takes the green ribbon from his lute to give to his beloved, only to reveal the bitter irony of his gesture in the spat-out words of *Der Jager* — exemplifies one of the many ways Skovhus has made this cycle very much his own, and a valuable contribution to the catalogue.

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THE TIMES
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THE TIMES

Prices and information correct at time of going to press 18.09.97.

Real girl power: **Peter Ackroyd** on three biographies that trace Jane Austen's journey from spinster to literary celebrity

She was sick and wicked



JANE AUSTEN
A Life
By Claire Tomalin
Viking, £20
ISBN 0 670 86528 1

JANE AUSTEN
By David Nokes
Fourth Estate, £20
ISBN 1 85702 419 2

JANE AUSTEN
A Biography
By Valerie Grosvenor Myer
Michael O'Mara Books, £18.99
ISBN 1 85479 213 X

When a woman of Jane Austen's acquaintance was delivered of a dead child, the novelist brightly remarked that the stillbirth was probably the result of shock when the wife happened "by chance to look at her husband". It is a joke in the worst possible taste, and hardly reflects the "gentle Jane" of literary stereotype, but it has the merit of being entirely characteristic. There is her famous remark, on hearing of an English defeat in Portugal: "How horrible it is to have so many people killed! And what a blessing that one cares for none of them."

Of course the varnish has been scraped off the portrait of this particular "literary maiden aunt" on previous occasions, but these three new biographies help to complete the restoration. Of course it is always irritating when a biographer finds that his or her subject has been adopted by another writer, but the volumes under review have the virtue of being quite distinct.

The impressions of Austen's character, for example, are analogous without being identical. Myer depicts Austen as a kind of outsider, "tougher, more irritable and more sardonic" than is usually considered; Nokes has discoverd within her writing "a restless, reckless undercurrent of frustration", while Tomalin, in turn, diagnoses the problems attendant upon "the dryness and coldness about her heart". The last seems most convincing. As Austen remarked of one of her own characters, she had "no more heart than a stone to people in general".

People in particular were of course quite another matter, and the domestic interiors contained within these biographies are always interesting. The facts are familiar enough. After some brief forays into female education, she never strayed beyond the enclosure of her family circle. All her life she remained a spinster, dependent upon the kindness of her siblings; but if her life of genteel poverty remained a constant source of vexation, her social insignificance helped to fuel her perceptions as well as her resentment. To some she seemed "dowdy", even "prim", but she was spirited enough when it suited her. One contemporary described her as a "butterfly". But she was not a butterfly at all. She was a hawk. "Pictures of perfection," she once wrote, "make me sick and wicked."

Her brother wrote that hers was "not by any means a life of event", but nothing sensational necessarily needs to occur to any writer. She only had to look into herself to find all the horrors and ambitions of the greater world. There is often the hunt for some "problem" which might explain her, when in fact the beauty of her writing suggests that there was no real problem at all. The fault lay in others, and it seems likely that she suffered all her life from being underestimated; she rarely had the confidence to challenge those who took her for granted, and instead indulged her sick or wicked thoughts within her letters to her sister.

The publication of *Sense and Sensibility*, when she had reached what seemed to her to be the dim and dreary age of 36, changed all that. This novel was followed by *Pride and Prejudice*, which had in fact been composed some 15 years before, and all at once the spinster became a literary celebrity. She was perhaps gratified by her success in more than one respect: she described each novel as her "darling child". But, in characteristic 18th-century fashion, she also decided to put her offspring to work. "I shall try to make all the money . . . I can of it," she wrote.

With the subsequent publication of *Emma* and *Mansfield Park* her originality and wit were widely remarked, although the periodicals were happy to emphasise that her writing was "inoffensive" and "harmless". Many of her admirers urged her to attempt something heroical or historical, but she knew that her apparent limitations were not limitations at all. Hence her famous remark about working upon two inches of ivory.

Ivory, however, is very tough. That is why Tomalin's fine phrase, "economic romance", is an appropriate description for all of Austen's fiction. Her novels are as concerned with money, and the power of money, as those of Balzac: both writers were conveying the vagaries of an unsettled society in which value lay only in capital and credit. Hers was by no means the soft or comfortable world to be found in film and television adaptations. It was an anxious civilisation moved by "debr and scandal" (among other subjects. Austen touches upon sodomy and incest) while at the same time fuelled by avarice and hypocrisy. It was a society in which the unsuccessful simply disappeared from sight.

Her own family were not immune from such pressures, and these biographies all suggest that they could be as greedy as any of their contemporaries. It may be that Austen, as her parents' seventh child, had the advantage of being able to observe her elders behaving in less than an impeccable manner. Certainly she saw through all the conventions by which the Austens and others were supposed to live. She had a clear eye which she turned upon herself as deliberately as she trained it upon others. She once described herself as a "wild Beast" but, in fact, she was only a human being stripped bare of all pretences.

Of the three works under review, that of Valerie Grosvenor Myer is the least satisfying. Nokes is good on Jane Austen's relationship with others, Tomalin on Austen's relationship with herself. Nokes is copious, Tomalin is more controlled. Nokes has written his life from the perspective of the family, standing by and watching their reactions: Tomalin is more dispassionate and combative. This reviewer would award the palm to Tomalin, although Nokes is never very far behind. But why speak of competition, when Austen herself found all the ways of the world highly comical?

Unable to do the locomotion

Russell Celyn Jones finds Amis going off the rails in his attempt at an American-style thriller

NIGHT TRAIN
By Martin Amis
Cape, £12.99
ISBN 0 224 05018 4

The sound an English writer makes when composing crime fiction is of a white man singing the blues. Crime fiction is endemic to America as opera is to Italy. At their best, American crime writers not only have a way of getting down in the dirt with their characters, but address state of the nation issues as well. The English crime novel, specifically the detective genre, seems too recreational, too middle-class, too nice.

Martin Amis was never going to write one of those. An honorary American crooner, he goes all the way with *Night Train*, a police procedural, and sets it in the States. Well, sort of. Amis has never had a fictional topography of his own. Instead, he has a study — from where he invents the low-life London described in *Money* and *London Fields* and the American city in *Night Train* that exists somewhere between New Jersey and Illinois, at a guess. Even his characters, as their names suggest (Paulie No, Overmars, Hi Tulkinghorn) are satirical abstractions that divulge no real geography. As a sort of double bluff he lends a parochial, sublunary edge to the voice, as though Mike Hoolihan, homicide detective and our narrator, has never strayed beyond her state. "What you do is you take the MIE around CSU skirting Lawnwoods" — as if we would know.

Mike Hoolihan is a woman who talks like a guy. Who talks like Amis in fact, with the same comic brio, multiple registers, riff phrasing, even the Bellowesque tautologies of which this author is so fond. "Everyone is quietly aware that Homicide is the daddy. Homicide is the Show." A case solved: "It's closed. It's made. It's *down*." Hoolihan is also a classic Amis paradox: a homicide detective investigating a *suicide*. The suicide victim, Jennifer, is the daughter of Mike's boss in the police, and had it all — brains, beauty, body. Her father suspects murder but can't find the evidence, despite the three bullets lodged in her skull.



NETWORK

Amis: following in Bellow's footsteps

Each lead sends Hoolihan — ex-alcoholic, a failure in love — into a cul-de-sac of remorse. Why should it be Jennifer and not Hoolihan to check out early? Jennifer was an astrophysicist who lived with unanswered questions and all Hoolihan can come up with is that she had become frightened of "losing control of her thoughts". Thoughts pertaining to the isolation of our galactic situation. The nuclear holocaust paranoia of *London Fields*, "the ultimate homicide", has here been displaced by the disharmony of the spheres — "the universe *is the case*".

Quite a heavy load for a 160-page police procedural. Indeed, there is something about Amis's voice that seems at odds with this genre. His mini-essays on the Big Bang and self-slaughter make for uncomfortable cerebral activity in Hoolihan, whose meditations they are meant to be. Amis writes from too far above his characters — ordinary persons mysteriously endowed with extraordinary linguistic gifts. Consequently, Amis can tell us what love or grief is, but he can't show us. From the first few pages you sense the culture rejecting the specimen. And Amis, the cool sentence architect, can't always get those sentences to work internally. "Denziger looked as though mathematics were happening to him right there and then . . . he looked subtracted." "His head vibrated, his head actually trembled to terrible imaginings."

Night Train has its antecedents in Saul Bellow, Elmore Leonard, the colloquialisms of a Southern writer, Barry Hannah (*Airships: Ray*), the movies (*Fargo*) and television. Hoolihan wags her finger so many times at the haunted fish-tank in the corner of the living room as *the* prime source of behaviour that an Amis theme starts to emerge: imitation *is* the culture. Even detectives are at it, an observation Bellow made 20 years earlier in *Humboldt's Gift*: "Even the cops have seen *The Godfather*, *The French Connection*, *The Valachi Papers* and other blast-and-bang thrillers." By the time Hoolihan concludes "I believe that copycat is as old as Homer", you sense Amis rationalising his own impersonations.

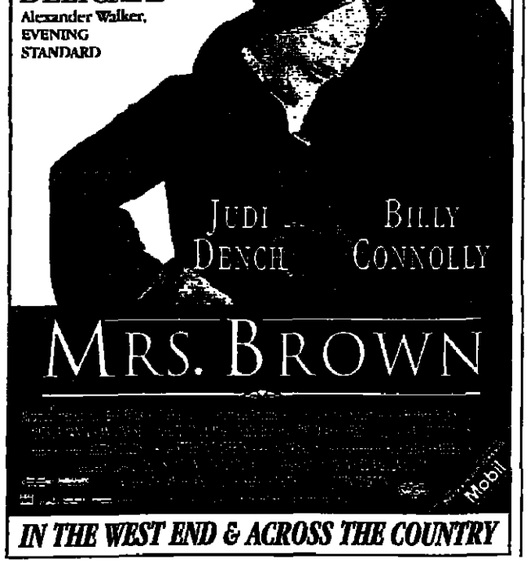
"Transdiscursive", Foucault called this. "One can be the author of a theory, tradition or discipline in which other books and authors will in turn find a place." Artists in one generation emulate greater artists in another and that's all right. Amis has built his career out of 20th-century American voices, principally Bellow's, and that's all right too. But Bellow is inimitable as an archivist of the human condition: as readers we construct *our* characters from his fictional blueprints. Amis is just not in that league. *Night Train* is a slick fast ride, but it lacks soul.

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Escape from others' voices

POETRY

SINCE a selection of one poet's work — here, Anthony Thwaite's *Selected Poems, 1956-1996* (Enitharmon Press, £8.95, ISBN 1 900564 55 6) — consists by definition mostly of work with which the poet's readers will be familiar, it is pleasant to be able to offer the opinion that the ten previously uncollected poems are as good as any Thwaite has written. Their tone is elegiac, though laced with wit and avoiding solemnity: "Changing my tie in the lavatory/ From black to flowery/ In the train from the funeral/ Travelling south to the wedding . . . "

With such straight lines Anthony Thwaite bids fair to become at last his own man in contemporary terms, and a poet whom no amount of aspirin will dissolve.

For Anthony Thwaite is a poet who gives at first the impression that he would go away if you took an aspirin. Always intelligent and technically accomplished, his work seems an amalgam of all the most fashionable modern influences. But there are better things to be found in his *Selected Poems 1956-1996*, when he escapes his origins in other poets.

Most of these come when he writes about the geography and history of places where he has lived abroad. Thwaite's senses are quickened by acquaintance with foreign parts, with a welcome diminishment of that irony which is his usual mode.

Not that it is the exotic which appeals to him. Broken bones and dust, the rubble that men leave behind them, such detritus forms the subject-matter of an impressive sequence, *The Letters of Synesius*, written in the voice of a Libyan bishop of the 5th century. The sharpest lines have real colloquial force: "To call a man a dog is an insult in many languages, but not to dogs."

Monologue in the Valley of the Kings, getting under the skin of an Egyptian seeking to make sense of the pharaohs' cult of death, is similarly powerful. So are the poems extracted here from Thwaite's *Victorian Voices* (1980). It is as if this poet needs a mask in order to speak out with anything like a voice of his own. Elsewhere, the best he achieves is something undeniably honest but too derivative of Larkin to do justice to its own experience.

ROBERT NYE

Without advice from a good woman

John Grigg

MUSSOLINI AND THE BRITISH
By Richard Lamb
John Murray, £25
ISBN 0 7195 5592 2

THE ITALIAN people had no desire to take part in the Second World War, least of all in alliance with Germany. But after the German victories in the spring of 1940 they were committed to war against a defeated France and an apparently doomed Britain by one man, Benito Mussolini, who had been their leader since 1922 and their absolute ruler since 1925.

As a young newspaper editor in the previous war, Mussolini had switched from neutrality to support of Italian intervention on the side of Britain and France, when the battle of the Marne convinced him that Germany would eventually lose.

His judgment at that time was relatively sound, though at the end of the war Italy had little to show for its involvement on the winning side (a factor in the rise of Fascism). In 1940 his judgment was catastrophic, bringing enormous suffering to his country and, to himself, an ignominious downfall and premature death at the hands of compatriots.

Another Latin dictator, Francisco Franco, though in some ways even less attractive than Mussolini, was a more stable character. Above all, he had the prudence and guile to keep his country out of the Second World War, and as a result remained in supreme power until he died — in his bed — in 1975. If Mussolini had acted similarly, both he and his regime might have survived into the post-war era.

Was Britain to any degree responsible for his fatal decision? There have always been exponents of the view that the axis between Fascist Italy and Nazi Germany was by no means inevitable, and that Mussolini was driven into Hitler's arms by the ineptitude of British policy towards Italy in the 1930s. Richard Lamb, author of so many good books about war and politics in the present century, now marshals this argument afresh with his usual diligence of research, using some primary and secondary material not previously available. Whether or not readers find his case entirely convincing — whether or not, indeed, they feel that he is entirely convinced by it himself — they can hardly fail to be fascinated by his account.

One new source on which he draws is a recent book (published only in America) on Margherita Sarfatti, who was Mussolini's mistress and confidante for 20 years. She was intelligent and artistic, opposed to violence and — not surprisingly, since she was Jewish — anti-Nazi. She was also pro-British and pro-French. Significantly, her influence was on the wane during the Abyssinian crisis in 1935, and not long afterwards Mussolini turned to serious persecution of the Jews in Italy, though he had earlier described Hitler's racial theories as "arrant nonsense".



Neville Chamberlain with Mussolini in 1938

Sarfatti's hold over him ended because, Lamb tells us, she "lost her sexual attraction" for the Duce. It is rather hard to see what British diplomacy could have done about that. But was it a mistake for Britain to oppose Mussolini's Abyssinian venture? Lamb argues that it was the wrong policy, even if it had been effectively applied (as, of course, it was not). He thinks that otherwise Mussolini would have remained an ally against Hitler. But he later admits that the Duce "would doubtless have proved an unreliable and treacherous ally", which seems to call the whole argument into question.

THERE was also the problem of Mussolini's claims on France, in regard to Nice, Corsica and Tunisia. France was the ally who really mattered to Britain, and the maintenance of peace depended, above all, on Franco-British solidarity. In any front that might be established against the threat of a resurgent Germany (such as the so-called Stresa Front, involving Italy, in April 1935), most of the effective strength had to be provided by Britain and France. Italy's importance, one way or the other, was strictly limited — as events were to prove.

Lamb rightly criticises Anthony Eden, who became Foreign Secretary at the end of 1935, for his defective sense of proportion as between Mussolini and Hitler. His dislike for the Duce amounted almost to a "personal vendetta" (a foretaste of his later obsession with Nasser), while he took an altogether more relaxed view of Hitler, who was, however, by far the more dangerous man. Eden's attitude is well illustrated in a letter to Neville Chamberlain written as late as January 1938 in which he said: "There seems to be a certain difference between Italian and German positions in that an agreement with the latter might have a chance of a reasonable life, especially if Hitler's own position were engaged, whereas Mussolini is, I fear, a complete gangster." Hitler more the gentleman!

Yet there were people with no such illusions who nevertheless felt that a proper stand should have been made against Mussolini over Abyssinia. Harold Macmillan reflected long afterwards that the Abyssinian issue offered the best chance of breaking the habit of appeasement, since it would have enlisted more popular support than any other (League of Nations idealists as well as Balance of Power realist). If there had been a successful show of strength over Abyssinia in 1935, Hitler might have been deterred from the remilitarisation of the Rhineland.

The vital need was for Britain and France to act together, and toughly, so dispelling the impression that they could easily be defied. In the absence of such joint resolve, any courting of Mussolini was likely to do more harm than good.

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A not-so-heavenly choir

Look back at the past by all means: but denigrating Britain's achievements is no way to face the future, says Kenneth Baker

A group of left-wing historians want to knock Margaret Thatcher off the pedestal which they believe has been so lovingly constructed and embellished by right-wing historians. The broad thrust of the essays in this rag-bag, *From Blitz to Blair*, is that Thatcherism fostered greedy individualism, created an underclass, destroyed British manufacturing industry, split the North from the South and fostered the position of Euroscepticism. By spending too much on nuclear weapons, these works contend, Margaret Thatcher postured pretentiously on the world stage. But this book will not become a seminal text of the counter-revolution.

The best essay is on Attlee, for he needs no Socialist apologists, unlike Wilson and Callaghan. The essay on the Thatcher years, by Professor Hirst of Birkbeck College, is superficial and slipshod. He does not even mention the privatisation of BT, which was the template for the rest. Unprivatised, BT would not today be the third largest telecommunications company in the world. It would have remained snugly torpid in the public sector, like France Telecom. He then says that Mrs Thatcher was "lucky" to win the Falklands War. "Lucky", Professor Hirst? What about those qualities which seem to be unfamiliar to you — of character and willpower?

The difficulty for the Labour revisionists is that they have to show that Thatcherism was not needed because the 1970s were not a nasty damaging decade. They have to overlook the fact that union power brought down two Prime Ministers, and the editor of this polemic, Mr Tiratsoo, even argues that the winter of discontent was due as much to bad British management as to the trade unions.

It is fortunate for new Labour, and for the country, that Tony Blair has rejected such drivel. He is building on Thatcherism, not pulling it down. He knows that privatisation works — rail consumer groups are already saying that services are better; he is not going to increase taxes on the middle classes, or scrap the union reforms and he has accepted the education reforms — national curriculum, tests, league tables, grant-maintained schools, student loans, and capped them with student fees. It must be very galling for the new revisionists to see that Tony Blair's abandonment of socialism was Mrs Thatcher's ultimate victory.

Roy Hattersley's *Prejudiced History* of the same period is a much more interesting, thorough and entertaining analysis. In 1992 he gave up active politics to make a lot of money by writing; there's nothing wrong in that, as Dr Johnson observed: only a blockhead would write for anything but money. He has revived the art of the political essay which expired in the 1930s: and every editor knows that Hatters is good for 800 words on anything by 4pm.

This is a substantial book and it certainly isn't an apologia for the failure of Labour governments. He distributes the blame between the parties though, not surprisingly, credits Labour with more decent principles. Hattersley's theme is that Britain, deluded by Empire, the special relationship with America, and "the uncertainty of the island race", did not sink itself into Europe. The biggest mistake was made by Clement Attlee in 1950 when he refused to join the European Coal and Steel Community, the forerunner of the European Union. His *villains are therefore de Gaulle*, Michael Foot and Margaret Thatcher; his heroes, Ted Heath, Roy Jenkins and Denis Healey. He has an arch swipe at the damascene conversion of Neil Kinnock, who turned from a left-wing rebel to a European Commissioner, pro-competition and nuclear deterrence.

Hattersley is an unabashed federalist: for him the United States of Europe is the only way forward. He has been consistent in this view, although as a Labour MP he fought the 1983 election on a manifesto commitment to withdraw from the Union.

We should be wary of such certainty. I remember Hattersley as a minister in Wilson's Government and in Callaghan's Cabinet personally advocating and implementing policies which at the time were supposed to solve all Britain's problems — prices and incomes policies, planning agreements, import and exchange controls, social contracts, a National Enterprise Board, and the nationalisation of shipbuilding, the ports and British Aerospace. So he writes from the vantage point of failure. Haven't competition, privatisation, monetarism and the market served the country better?

Hattersley's attitude to Blair is one of bemused admiration because "he has created a political party which is free from the taint of party politics". The jury is out as to whether he can get away with this but Hattersley, in the meantime, is enjoying an Indian summer preaching the old values of socialism, equality and taxing the rich to help the poor. The radical egalitarians of old Labour can't stand listening to Hattersley on equality, for to them it's like hearing a choir singing in a three-star restaurant. But Tony Blair should learn one lesson from these two books: Clement Attlee, Harold Wilson, James Callaghan and John Major all came to grief over defending an unrealistic value of sterling. Floating defuses the crisis but Blair will have to ensure that the euro does not become his albatross.

The trouble with both of these books is that they have to claim that the recent history of Britain has been one of decline, despair and defeat. As we approach the millennium, that view should be challenged. Today Britain is the seventh most competitive country in the world — the strong man of Europe, with declining unemployment, rising output, inflation contained and union power curtailed. Eighty per cent of our young people go on to further and higher education, and this year has seen the best results ever in GCSE and A-level exams. We have the soundest financial system of any developed country for dealing with the huge problem of paying pensions to future generations. Over the past 50 years, Britain has enjoyed a renaissance in classical and popular culture which has produced some of the world's greatest writers, poets, sculptors, artists, musicians and film-makers. Denigration of our recent past is no way to face the future.

FIFTY YEARS ON
A Prejudiced History of Britain Since the War
By Roy Hattersley
Little, Brown, £20
ISBN 0 316 87932 0

FROM BLITZ TO BLAIR
A New History of Britain Since 1939
Edited by Nick Tiratsoo
Weidenfeld & Nicolson, £20
ISBN 0 297 81856 2


Hattersley: older values

Pistols at the parsonage

Ian McIntyre

THE BRONTES
A Life in Letters
By Juliet Barker
Viking, £20
ISBN 0 670 87212 1

Another book about the Brontës by Juliet Barker? Didn't she write that whopping prizewinning biography just a few years ago? Isn't she the author of *The Brontë Yearbook*? Can there really be anything more? Well yes, as it happens, quite a lot, and the former curator of the Parsonage Museum at Haworth has devised an effective and highly readable way of presenting it.

George Eliot wished the characters in *Jane Eyre* "would talk a little less like the heroines and heroines of police reports". It is not something she could have said about the Brontë sisters' letters. Juliet Barker says that when she was at work on her biography she was struck by their eloquence and immediacy. But that raised a problem familiar to anyone who has attempted a scholarly life. "The discipline of the biographical form and the absolute necessity of including only apposite quotation meant that, reluctantly and, at times, belligerently, I felt obliged to omit passages of quite outstanding lyricism or humour or interest."

Hence this volume of letters. It is principally on Charlotte that the spotlight falls, because most of the letters are hers. Juliet Barker has also, however, drawn skilfully on Emily and Anne's diary papers to plug gaps in the correspondence.

I particularly liked Mrs Gaskell's alarming discovery, while visiting the parsonage, that when Mr Brontë dressed in the morning, his watch was not the only thing he popped into his pocket. "There was this little deadly pistol sitting down to breakfast with us, kneeling down to prayers at night — to say nothing of a loaded gun hanging up on high ready to pop off on the slightest emergency."

Several important letters have come to light since the publication of *The Brontës*. Barker is now able to demonstrate, for example, that previous biographies were wrong in suggesting that Branwell attended the Royal Academy. In some previous editions many letters have been carelessly transcribed or heavily edited. The fuller version of a letter Branwell wrote in October 1845, published here, refers to the wife of his employer, Mr Robinson as "one whom I must, till death, call my *wife*," a phrase which Barker marshals in support of her view that the relationship was sexual. She also convincingly knocks on the head a recent feminist interpretation of a letter to Southey from Charlotte which argued that she was being sarcastic at the Poet Laureate's expense.

What I enjoyed most in this splendid book were Charlotte's sharply observed sketches of her contemporaries. Although she later falls in love with him, she is not initially impressed by Monsieur Heger, the director of her Brussels *pension*: "Sometimes he borrows the lineaments of an insane Tom-cat, sometimes those of a delirious Hyena." It was gratifying to learn that some of the love scenes in *Jane Eyre* had made the great Thackeray cry, but: "Critics, it appears to me, do not know what an intellectual boa-constrictor he is."

Relatives come visiting from the South of England: "They reckon to be very grand folks indeed," she tells a friend. "To my eyes they've seemed to be an attempt to play the great Mogul down in Yorkshire." Up in London, she hears Cardinal Wiseman speak. "He came swimming into the room smiling, simpering, and bowing like a fat old lady," she writes to her father. "He spoke in a smooth whining manner, just like a canting Methodist preacher."

Danger. You are entering an intellectual hard-hat area. Belligerent Yorkshirewoman working overhead.

NATIONAL PORTRAIT GALLERY

Branwell's painting of his sisters

Tales traverse a continent

To anthologise sub-Saharan Africa under the problematic rubric of the modern — as the title of this eclectic selection of black African short stories demonstrates — necessarily involves massive acts of exclusion and a burden on the material to match up continually to its titular promise.

Charles Larson has long been at the centre of the critical debate about what exactly constitutes the modern in contemporary African writing and here he lays down the tables of his definition, based on certain complementary and contesting precepts to do with taste, with Europe in Africa and with the African oral tradition of storytelling.

Wole Soyinka's classic 1960 poem, *Telephone Conversation*, of black resignation colliding, sight unseen, against white hubris, prefaces the book. His fiction is, strangely, not included. In an essay from 1967 entitled *The Writer in a Modern African State*, Soyinka describes the then current state of the African writer as "a stage of disillusionment" after the exuberance of the covenant between writer and nation — that all the writer's skills should, in the new post-colonial situation, be devoted to the promotion of a collective ideal — is betrayed by corruption, coups and civil wars.

With Charles Larson's 27 stories (six by women, including the enduring Bessie Head) drawn from 16 countries, writers now have a proven history of persecution to add to their professional betrayal. One contributor, the Nigerian, Ken Saro-Wiwa, whose acid satire brightens this sombre book, was hanged by the military regime for his politics in 1995. In his detailed notes on each author, Charles Larson includes the gruesome fact that Saro-Wiwa's hangman only succeeded in killing him on the fifth attempt. Saro-Wiwa's epistolary tale, *Africa Kills Her Sun*, written in 1989, is prophetic. The narrator is executed by the State.

Between Chinua Achebe's generation of writers and the newer generation headed by *wunderkind* Ben Okri, African writing has become less didactic. This move from the outside to the inside still carries a charge to examine the state of the State but there is a return to the play of the earliest contributor, Amos Tutuola. A feature of Tutuola's opening story, *The Complete Gentleman*, is its devotion to African animist thought: the representation of abstractions in physical terms. Ben Okri continues this tradition, albeit in a socio-economic landscape of post-independence and post-civil war Nigeria. His story, set in Somalia, depicts a landscape and people devastated by famine and saved, ironically, by the peace enforcers of the United States.

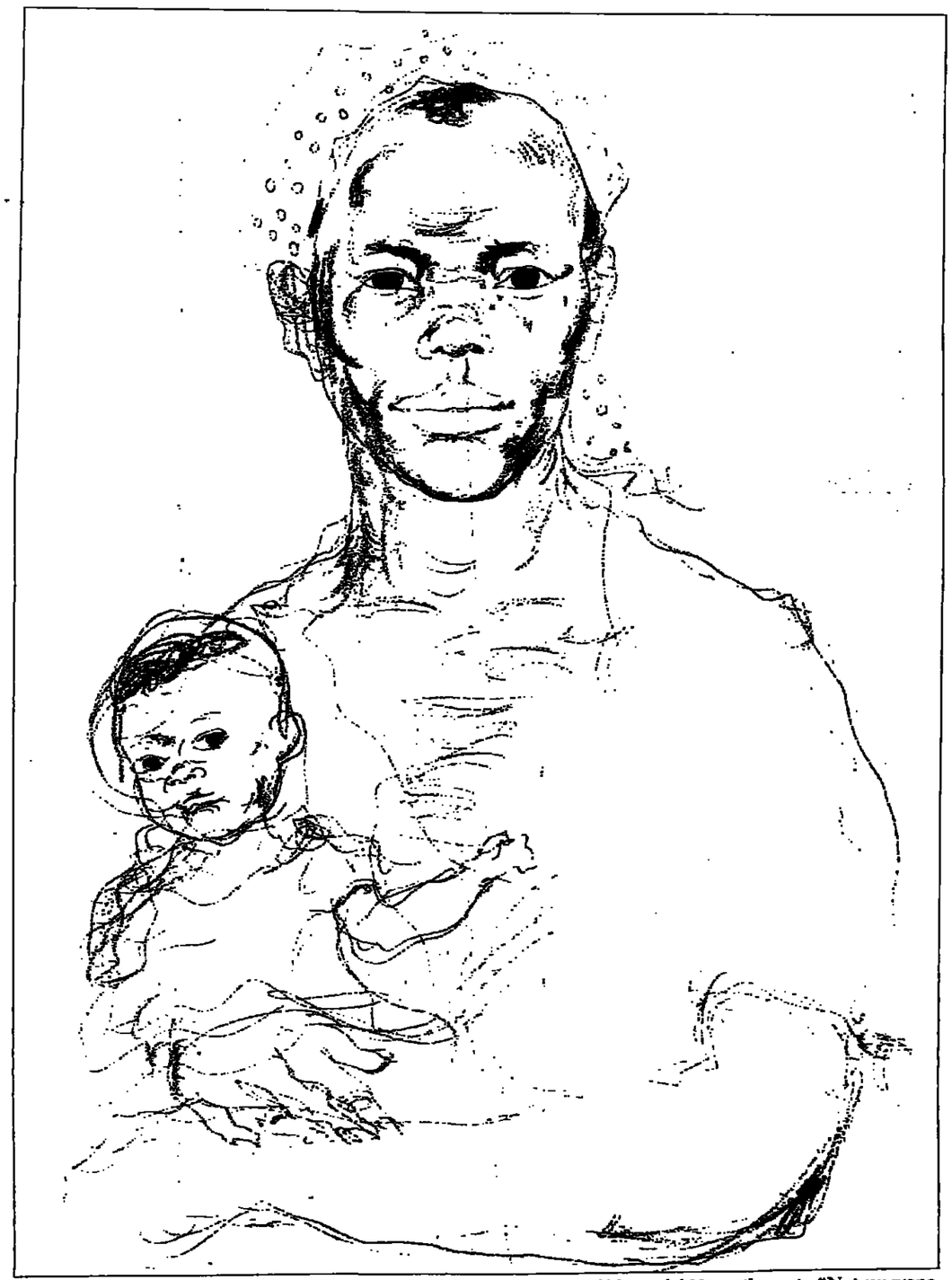
The stories from the Fifties and Sixties explore the colonial past and the colonial experience. They are well-crafted (Camara Laye of Guinea), if a little preachy (Birago Diop of Senegal), and still have a fresh feel. In the more recent fiction (Sindiwe Magona of South Africa and Veronique Tadjo of Ivory Coast) history and geography combine with ethnicity to address blacks globally.

I miss the haunting voice of the late Zimbabwean writer, Danbudzo Marachera among the younger contributors, as well as his more senior countryman, Charles Mungoshi. Missing too are the eminent Ghanaians, Ayi Kwei Armah, Kofi Awooner and Kojo Laing. Welcome though this handsome production is, in the pursuit of a tropical classical ideal, Charles Larson has been a little too styptic.

Fred D'Aguiar's latest novel, Feeding the Ghosts, is published by Chatto & Windus, priced £14.99.

Fred D'Aguiar

UNDER AFRICAN SKIES
Modern African Stories
Edited by Charles R. Larson
Payback Press, £14.99
ISBN 0 86241 715 5


Paul Hogarth's *Bemba Woman and Child*, Northern Rhodesia, 1956. Of his model Hogarth wrote: "Not everyone gazed at white men with such good humour in this part of Africa. I drew her seated outside her house, chatting to neighbours in the late afternoon sun." From his autobiography, *Drawing on Life* (David Charles, £30)

THE TIMES/DILLONS BOOKER FORUM

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YOU ARE INVITED to an evening of readings and discussion with five of the shortlisted authors for this year's Booker Prize. This Times/Dillons forum will be held on Monday, October 13. Chaired by Peter Stothard, the Editor of *The Times*, the forum is an opportunity to participate in the award. The six nominations are:

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(Secker & Warburg, £9.99).
The Essence of the Thing, by Madeleine St John
(Fourth Estate, £9.99).
The God of Small Things, by Arundhati Roy
(Flamingo, £15.99).

The forum will be held at Church House, Dean's Yard, Westminster London SW1P 3NZ, starting at 7.30pm. Tickets at £10 (concessions £7.50) include an audio cassette featuring four- to five-minute extracts from each of the books and information about the the six authors. Subject to demand, the event will be interpreted by sign language.

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Comeuppance from Down Under in dickens of a book

Erica Wagner

JACK MAGGS
By Peter Carey
Faber, £15.99
ISBN 0 571 19088 X

"IT WAS a dismal January day in the year of 1818, and the yellow fog which had lain low all morning lifted a moment in the afternoon and then, as if the desolate pile of rock and stone thereby revealed was far too melancholy a sight to be endured, it descended again like a shroud around the walls of Newgate Prison."

So opens *Jack Maggs*. Jack Maggs, that is, by Tobias Oates, ambitious, nervous, absolutely magnetic young novelist who in 1837 is only just beginning to make his reputation. Tobias Oates, who has a flamboyant style, a taste for luxury, a father in debt, a dull wife, a pretty sister-in-law for whom he nurses an illicit passion; Tobias Oates, who can stride all night through London's streets, who can write a novel in a lurching coach, whose childhood, coloured by sorrow and fear, makes him seek out poverty, despair and wretchedness and set down what he sees with his racing quill. He is a familiar — a comforting — figure, this Tobias Oates.

"It was a Saturday night when the man with the red waistcoat arrived in London." So opens *Jack Maggs* by Peter Carey, the dazzling Australian novelist whose imagination is only matched by his unpredictability. From the racketing saga of *Illywhacker* through the tormented romance of *Oscar and Lucinda* and, latterly, the complex and sometimes puzzling novels *The Tax Inspector* and *The Unusual Life of Tristan Smith*, Carey has turned a sharp eye on worlds utterly invented by him, bringing his inner Antipodes to life before our eyes. In *Jack Maggs* he has attempted something new again: taking another's invented world — that of Charles Dickens — and turning it in his hand like a prism to cast a new kind of light.

For there is, of course, already one novel that introduces us to a convict returned at his own mortal peril from New South Wales to meet the boy he has made into a gentleman. But in that novel the boy's benefactor remains, even to the end, a shadowy figure. Abel Magwitch threatens young Pip on the marshes; even as he brings his protégé away from the blacksmith's forge he casts a shadow over his life which is never burnt away, and the life which the convict made for himself, both before and after his conviction, remain too in that shadow.

Carey looks to the other side of the world, his side of the world, for the centre of his novel, as Jack Maggs writes — backwards and in invisible ink — the story of his damaged life to his dissolute protégé Henry Phipps, who shares with Pip only a disgust at the source of his fortune. This laborious task, the difficulty of which might be taken as a comment on the struggle to bring this voice of early Australia into the open, is interwoven with the young Oates's encounters with "the huge and haunted engine of Jack Maggs": the novelist wrests his story from him by means of hypnotic magnetism, making fiction into theft.

Carey's prose, as ever, is burnished to a high shine. Sulphurous, smoky London, its streets clogged with horseshit and refuse, its river trailed with slime and sewage, crowds the reader as it crowds Jack Maggs, fled from the clean sun of New South Wales. And yet this is not pastiche: the distinction between Oates and Carey is clear, and the novel is filled with the small observations that make Carey's work so poignantly memorable. Tobias's sister-in-law, her affection for him faltering, sees how, as he leans against the fireplace, "the mantel was too tall for him, and how he stretched to accommodate himself to its demands. It was a vision most profoundly discouraging, and one she wished to God she had not seen."

But closing the book I recalled hearing Carey read its opening chapter aloud at the Hay Festival last year. When he had finished, a member of the audience asked him why he had chosen to set his novel in 1837. Carey looked startled, slightly alarmed, and said quietly: "I'd rather not answer that question." It is a question that still hangs in my mind. Jack Maggs is a fine novel, more than just an entertainment, and yet it seems too dependent on the conceit that props it up. Without Dickens, could I have pictured Oates? Without Magwitch, Maggs? Carey is good enough to stand alone, and in the end I wished he had.

Bargains of the week: New York for £178; plus half-price business-class fares to Sydney and Melbourne

HOTELS

WEEKEND rates at the Europa Intercontinental hotel in Brussels until next April are £69 per room per night. Guests can choose an "extra" benefit such as a room upgrade, a second room at half price or double airline mileage. Details: 0345 581444.

■ THE VILLA Principe Leopoldo, overlooking Lake Lugano in Switzerland, has a two-night programme "Lugano Evasion" from Monday to Friday until the end of the year at £203 per room per night for double occupancy. The offer, through Prima Hotels, includes one evening meal per person. Details: 0800 181535.

■ A £9 REDUCTION off any two-day ticket to Alton Towers is included in a special half-term offer through Goldenrail, on October 24, of two nights' accommodation at either the Nottingham or Derby Novotel. Cost is £99 per room (up to two adults and two children). Details: 0161 2385206.

■ THE FOUR-STAR Golden Valley Thistle Hotel in Cheltenham has a health and beauty break at £179 per person for two nights' half-board accommodation including massage, facial, manicure and make-up lesson. Details: 01242 232691.

■ THE SAVOY HOTEL, London, is reviving the heyday of the Big Band era with Saturday night dinner dances, featuring the Piccadilly Dance Orchestra with tunes from the Twenties, Thirties and Forties. Cost is £40 per person. Details: 0171-420 2608.

■ GUESTS staying on a three-night Classic Collection weekend package at Brown's Hotel in Mayfair, at a rate of £190 per room per night, get the Sunday night at half price until the end of the year. Details: 0171-493 6020.

■ BERLIN'S famous Hotel Ablon, part of the Kempinski Hotels Group, has a weekend experience package at £538 for two people for two nights, including limousine transfer, one dinner and a special gift on arrival. Details: 0800 868588.

■ SPECIAL festive breaks at five-star hotels and resorts worldwide are included in the Leading Hotels of the World Christmas and new year brochure. Details: 0171-936 5028.

■ THE MERIDIEN HOTEL in Piccadilly, London, has launched an afternoon tea in its Terrace Gardens restaurant which features a glass sunroof. A traditional meal, including gourmet sandwiches and scones, costs £17.50 per person. Details: 0171-465 1642.

■ HILTON in the UK is offering special rates and free accommodation for partners travelling with conferences and delegates at weekends until the end of the year. The 24-hour weekend delegate rate will be 50 per cent less than the midweek rate. Details: 0645 314151.

■ THE ENNERDALE Country House Hotel, a restored Grade II listed building near Cleator in the Lake District, has a two-night break through Sunvil UK for £114 person, based on double occupancy including a cruise, weather permitting, on Derwent Water. Details: 0181 2329788.

■ THE CHOICE Hotels group in Europe has just published its directory of more than 350 hotels, including 60 in the UK, operating under brand names such as Clarion Quality and Comfort Inns. The free guide includes location maps of the hotels and information on local attractions and landmarks. Details: 0800 444444

LAWRENCE SMITH



A fruit seller in Hué: typical of the sights on view on two fortnight-long mountain bike tours of central Vietnam available from Symbiosis Expedition Planning in December. Priced from £1,245 a person, including B&B, quality bikes, support vehicle, maintenance service and local guides; flights extra. Details: 0171-924 5906.

FLIGHTS

PRICES in British Airways latest world offers include US destinations between £179 and £199; Dubai at £359; Cape Town £459; Singapore £397. Details: 0345 222111.

■ VIRGIN Atlantic's riposte is to shave £1 off BA's transatlantic prices. New York return costs from £178 with Los Angeles priced from £298. Details: 01293 747245.

■ AIR Tickets Direct has a £125 Stansted-Milan excursion flying with Air UK. Details: 0990 320321.

■ HALF-PRICE business-class fares to Sydney and Melbourne from London or Manchester are available with Austria's Lauda Air between November 1 and December 10. The Travelbug charges £1,685 return with stopovers allowed in Vienna and Kuala Lumpur. Details: 0161-740 8998.

■ RETURN Alitalia flights to Bangkok cost £383, with Johannesburg priced at £340 and Hong Kong at £426 through Lupus Travel. Details: 0171-306 3000.

■ TICKETS for Southwest can now be bought in the UK. The cut-price no-frills US airline services 51 cities in 25 states coast to coast. Depending on the route a one-way ticket costs between £49 and £83. Details: 01293 596677.

■ GULF AIR has extended its special deals. Excursion fares to the Gulf start at £399 while full-fare passengers can take along a companion free of charge. Details: 0171-408 1717.

FERRIES

SWANSEA Cork Ferries has a special weekend return fare of £139, available until December 15. The price includes a crossing for a car and up to five adults on a Thursday and Friday, returning from Cork on or before the following Monday. Details: 01792 456116.

■ IRISH Ferries Holidays has departures in September and October from £169.50 per person, which will include three nights' B&B in Connemara and two in Dublin, as well as a ferry crossing from Pembroke to Dublin. The price is based on four people travelling. Details: 0990 170000.

■ SCANDINAVIAN Seaways is offering eight-night self-catering holidays in Germany from £184 per person, leaving Harwich on September 22. The price is based on four travelling and includes ferry. Details: 0990 333111.

■ HOVERSPEED has begun a Liverpool to Dublin ferry service (Seacat on Wednesdays). Prices are £115 for a car and two adults, and £38 for foot passengers — both five-day returns. Details: 0345 523523.

■ STENA Line is offering £50 discounts on selected self-catering ski holidays booked before October 18. Brochure prices start at £37 each for eight adults sharing an apartment in La Clusaz, France. The price includes ferry crossing for two cars. Details: 0990 747474.

HOLIDAYS

UMBRIAN apartments close to Lake Trasimeno are available at a 20 per cent saving until the end of September with Room Service. A week's self-catering including flights now costs from £195 a person; an apartment sleeping six costs £189 a week, flights extra. Details: 0171-636 6888.

■ TUNISIA for a fortnight's Airtours holiday for £349 a person with half-board and a flight from Gatwick on Sunday is on offer from Co-op Travelcare. Details: 0541 500388.

■ FUERTEVENTURA for a fortnight's self-catering is available for £179 a person from Lunn Poly. Fly from Gatwick next Wednesday. Details from the company's Holiday Shops.

■ AUTUMN savings of up to £250 a person are on offer until the end of the year from Hayes & Jarvis, with a week in Cuba costing from £389 a person and a week's cruising in the Maldives from £689. Prices include return flights. Details: 0181-748 0088.

■ GRECIAN GEMS cruises sailing from Venice for a week from September 27 and October 18 are available from £499 a person from Seafarer Cruises. Price includes full board and flights from the UK. Details: 0171-234 0500.

■ BARBADOS for a fortnight for £549 a person with a flight from Gatwick on October 5 and room-only accommodation is on offer from Cosmos. Details: 0181-480 5799.

■ TURKEY at half-term is available from Tapestry Holidays with a week's self-catering at Turunc Bay, and a week's B&B at Olu Deniz both costing £349 a person, including flights from Gatwick or Manchester on October 19. Details: 0181-742 0055.

■ CAP ESTEREL on the Côte d'Azur is among French holiday villages available at special rates at half-term from EuroVillages. A week from October 18 or 25 costs £315 for a party of five including return Dover-Calais crossing and studio accommodation. Details: 01606 734400.

■ THE TAJ MAHAL, Jaipur and Delhi are included in a week-long Indian tour available from £549 a person between October 7 and November 25 from Kuoni. Price includes flights from Gatwick, half-board and sightseeing. Details: 01306 742000.

■ PLYMOUTH and the "Pilgrims" in its living museum are among the highlights offered by New England Vacations. Four nights in a 19th-century inn plus three in Boston cost from £649 a person including flights from Gatwick and car hire. Details: 01727 857100.

■ ISRAEL's first all-inclusive hotel, the Lagoona in Eilat, will be available from £429 for adults and £359 for children from October 26 with Destination Red Sea. Flights from Gatwick on Sundays. Details: 0181-440 9900.

■ SRI LANKA for a fortnight for £666 a person staying in the colonial Mount Lavinia hotel, the former Governor's residence overlooking the sea near Colombo, is available from November 4 to December 2 from Somak Holidays. Flights from Gatwick. Details: 0181-423 3000.

■ SINGLES' weeks in Cyprus from December 10 and January 24 next year are on offer from £331 a person from Argo Holidays. Price includes accommodation and dinner at Atlantica Hotel, Limassol, activities and flights from a choice of UK airports. Details: 0171-331 7070.

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Racing trips are under orders

BY ROBERT WRIGHT

A NEW travel company aims to bring the pleasures of horse racing to newcomers to the sport, as well as providing organised days out for the experienced racegoer.

Winning Breaks offers visits to stables and the gallops as well as race days. The company says the trips should answer questions such as "*Which enclosure do I go into? How do I place a bet?*" which can put newcomers off going racing.

By limiting numbers to 15 each weekend, it hopes to achieve a house-party atmosphere. The cost of each weekend break will vary depending on hotel costs and the quality of the racing, but the first weekend, at Newmarket from October 3 to 5, is £295.

Racegoers will stay at the Rutland Arms, in the centre of the town, for two nights, with breakfast and dinner. Transport to the races, entry to the members' enclosure and trips to the gallops, a racing stable, the National Horse Racing Museum and the National Stud are all included.

● *Winning Breaks 0171 586 2162*



Booking system will boost Eurostar

EUROSTAR is introducing a reservations system, Elgar, to increase passenger numbers to Paris by 50 per cent. *Steve Keenan writes.* It is already available to 4,000 travel agents in the UK and is intended to match the distribution power of competing airlines.

The system — also able to book domestic UK rail travel — will be available to travel agents overseas and on the Internet. Hotel, coach travel and car rental booking will also be added.

The system has been designed by Eurostar UK. Ian Brooks, executive commercial director, says: "From now on, we are starting to compete on an equal footing with the airlines."

When Eurostar services began nearly three years ago, airlines carried four million passengers between London and Paris and 1.2 million on the Brussels route. Eurostar, which has developed the total air-rail market to six million and 2.2 million respectively, has about 50 per cent of the markets.

Mr Brooks acknowledged that many travellers will not switch to rail because of geography, frequent-flyer schemes or the fact that some connect to other flights in Paris or Brussels.

He believes that Eurostar could attract half of the three million people still flying to Paris. Elgar will help to *win them over, he says. Travel agents* will be happier to sell Eurostar because of the ease of system access, ticketing and accounting procedures.

Agents overseas will also be able to book Eurostar in advance, which is particularly significant for the Asian and American markets. One in ten leisure travellers on Eurostar is American. The company is also banking on a further boost to business when a high-speed rail line opens in Belgium in December, cutting journey times to Brussels by more than half an hour to *two hours, 40 minutes.*

Machines enabling travellers to insert a credit card and receive a ticket at Waterloo station will be introduced in December. Restrictions allowing travellers to book only two months in advance are also being ended by December, to allow 330-day advance booking.

Windfalls take the ski season to a peak

BY JOANNA BALE

Record numbers of skiers are preparing to head for the snows of Europe and the US this year, many spending windfall cash from the building societies to take advantage of the strength of the pound against major currencies.

Tour operators across the country have been surprised by the surge in demand, which has already led to increases of up to 500 per cent in early bookings and predictions that the coming season could be the best for well over a decade.

The rush back to the pistes is being led by families with young children who are taking advantage of deals which enable a family of four to have an all-inclusive holiday in the mountains for well under £1,000.

"The return of confidence in the British economy, combined with the strength of the pound, means that a winter sports holiday is back on the agenda for thousands of British skiers for the first time since the 1980s," Steve Garley, the commercial director of Thomson, says. Particularly popular are chalet holidays with tour operators who can afford to include a range of extras from ski passes to packed lunches.

So far this year, Thomson says, bookings to France are double what they were at this time last year. Switzerland is 270 per cent up, Austria 60 per cent. Canada 300 per cent up and the US 500 per cent higher than it was a year ago.

By the end of the season — *provided it snows in the Alps* — the number of Britons who will take a ski holiday is expected to be at least 10 per cent more than the 700,000 who did so last year.

"Our bookings are up by a third, and we are heading for a record-breaking winter," says Andy Perrin, marketing director of Crystal. "Everyone is claiming a slice of it, but the building society windfall is certainly present. People are *spending more on their holi*days as a result, going four-star instead of three, and high season instead of low. A family of four can easily save £1,000 this year."

The strength of the pound has cut brochure prices, with savings of up to £300 per holiday. Lift passes, lunches and drinks bought separately are also significantly cheaper, with savings in Austria, France and Switzerland of around 20 per cent.

With the pound beginning to peak, and the possibility of slight increases in brochure prices, operators recommend booking now for the best deals. Prices in Inghams's recently released second-edition brochure are £12 to £20 higher per person, with the US showing the biggest leap because of the rise in US airport tax from $6 to $31.

Inghams is claiming to be the market leader, stealing ahead of Crystal, last year's *front runner, with a 30 per* cent market share. It says that it has sold 40 per cent of its capacity and is between 60 per cent and 70 per cent up on last year, when it carried almost 91,000 skiers.

Official industry figures for the end of July reveal that France is in the lead, attracting 23 per cent of the total ski market from the UK, followed by Italy with 22 per cent and Austria with 16 per cent. But since then bookings have risen sharply.

Although the figures suggest Italy is performing well, most operators report that it is now starting to lag behind other destinations. Paul Lower, commercial director of First Choice, believes France will remain the most popular ski destination for UK customers.

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A family affair: four people can go on a winter sports trip for less than £1,000

The Travel Business

HARVEY ELLIOTT

How hoteliers create custom

At the first nip of autumn my travel horizons tend to contract and encompass little more than the British Isles. *There is something particu*larly nostalgic and appealing about a break in one of the home countries when there is an R in the month.

During the past few years I have stayed in Northern Ireland, Scotland, Wales, the Yorkshire Dales, the Cotswolds, Norfolk, Devon and Dorset, and have concluded almost every time that the UK is the perfect place to be.

Mostly I have stayed in country cottages, whose owners — ranging from the National Trust to private individuals — let them at often ridiculously low rates to casual visitors.

> Hotels are finding their own niche market and going for it

But I had heard that hotels in Britain are undergoing another of their regular metamorphoses. So last weekend I stayed in Calcot Manor, a former farmhouse near Tet*bury on the southern edge* of the Cotswolds, whose owner rightly decided that in the early 1980s there was more money to be made from holidaymakers than farming.

Like hundreds of other country house hotels, Calcot Manor could do no wrong during the "yuppie years". Prices soared as the hotel catered to the rich palates and demands of the newly wealthy young City types.

But when their lifestyle suddenly went flat, many similar hotels went out of business. Calcot not only survived but found a surprising new formula for success: children.

Those 1980s yuppies are now older, still wealthy, but married with children. So the owners of Calcot built a playroom known as the "playzone", provided nannies and created family suites specifically to attract people like that. And it works.

Throughout the country, hotels are now finding their own niche market and going for it — with tremendous success.

Last week readers of *Executive Travel* magazine overwhelmingly voted the Savoy in London the best business hotel in the world. It swept to the title by concentrating on providing the ultimate in food, elegance and chic.

In the same poll London's Metropolitan was voted the best new hotel of the year, an achievement based largely on targeting young international business clients from the four Ms — music, media, movies and models.

But for me, the most enterprising is the much less grand Villa Magdala Hotel in Bath. Faced with the *universal problem of how to* persuade guests to eat in the hotel, the proprietor Alison Williams hit on the idea of a joint deal with the six top restaurants in the city.

Now anyone taking a two-night, £90, midweek short break at the Villa Magdala gets accommodation and breakfast — plus a complimentary taxi ride to dinner at any one of those six leading restaurants.

All over the country, in cites and towns, hoteliers are dreaming up daring ideas to attract custom. And autumn is the time they usually float their ideas — at discount rates. Take advantage.

The oft-heard grumble that British hotels are not innovative is, clearly, nonsense.

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St Lucia lobbies airlines

BY LINSEY MCNEILL

ST LUCIA'S new Minister of Tourism, Philip J. Pierre, flew to the UK this week to try to persuade more charter airlines to launch flights to the Caribbean island.

Faced with a potential collapse in its agriculture-based economy, St Lucia is determined to replace its threatened banana industry with tourism.

Caledonian Airways and Britannia are the only charter *airlines now flying from the* UK to St Lucia, alongside scheduled services from British Airways and Caribbean carrier BWIA and, according to Mr Pierre, more seats are urgently needed if the island's economy is to be rescued.

"There was a 10 per cent increase in visitors to St Lucia from the UK in the first six months of this year compared with 1996, and we think there is room for even more growth." Mr Pierre says. "We are launching a major advertising campaign in the UK next week to stimulate interest, but we need more flights."

Of the 128,760 visitors to St Lucia from January to June, 27,237 were from the UK, making this the island's second largest market after the United States.

As well as talking to a number of UK charter airlines, Mr Pierre met BA to discuss the carrier raising the *frequency of its flights from* three to four a week. The airline said it was considering his suggestion.

The island wants tourism to replace agriculture as its largest industry by 2002, when the special quotas that the European Union grants Caribbean islands for the import of bananas will be scrapped. After intense pressure from the United States, whose big conglomerate growers dominate the cheap exports from Latin America, the World Trade Organisation ruled last week that from then all the islands, including St Lucia, will have to sell their produce on the open market.



Pierre: seeks more flights

"We don't think we will be able to compete with countries such as Costa Rica because we are a small island and don't produce as much," Mr Pierre says. "Instead, we want to sell holidays."

Of St Lucia's 150,000 inhabitants, up to 20,000 are involved in banana-growing, while just 11,000 are employed in tourism, but Mr Pierre said: "We are getting the population to understand the benefits of tourism, and persuading those in agriculture to grow produce to support our tourism industry."

The number of hotel rooms in St Lucia is expected to increase over the next five years from 3,000 to 7,000 as developers are offered tax breaks and other financial incentives by the St Lucia Labour Party, which ended the 30-year reign of the United Workers Party on May 23.

Projects already announced include the reopening this December of the expanded and refurbished Jalousie Plantation Resort in which the Government and Hilton International have invested $20 million (£12.5 million); two new hotels in the north of the island by Hyatt and the French chain Vigie; and a new all-inclusive resort in the south.

More Brits use rail to Italy

BRITISH holidaymakers are switching to rail to reach the ancient towns and cities of Italy, *Harvey Elliott writes.*

The Italian package tour specialist Citalia says that more than 4 per cent of the 1.7 million Britons who go to Italy now head for Rome, Florence or Sorrento by train — either on the high-speed Eurostar to Paris, then overnight through France, or on the luxurious Venice Simplon-Orient-Express.

The devaluation of the lire led to a 6 per cent increase in visitors from Britain last year and an even bigger rise is expected this year.

Surprisingly, Tuscany is no longer the most popular Italian region for British tourists. Campania — Sorrento, the Amalfi coast and Pompeii — has leapt into the lead, attracting 18.5 per cent of Citalia's clients last year compared with 17.7 per cent who went to Venice and Lake Garda, and 13 per cent who visited Florence, Siena and Chianti.

Nights at the opera

BY TONY DAWE

OPERA-GOERS feeling deprived because of the closure of the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, are flocking to Europe for a fix.

Leading travel firms offering opera tickets as an extra to their overseas packages and companies specialising in music tours report a huge increase in demand this summer and expect the boom to continue throughout Covent Garden's two-and-a-half-year shutdown for refurbishment.

Thomson said four out of five holidaymakers on packages to the Italian Lakes and mountains this summer went to the opera in Verona. Kirker Holidays reported "a staggering demand" for its short breaks to the Italian city, with numbers up by 700 per cent.

Gloria Ward, a Thomson executive, says: "We started by selling opera tickets to holidaymakers as they arrived in the resorts, but the full opera programme now appears in our Lakes & Mountains brochure. Clients can book for *Tosca* or *Aida* at the same time as they book the holiday.

"Next year, we will offer trips to Verona for those staying in some Austrian resorts. Most of our clients opt for the unnumbered stone-step seating, which — together with coach travel from the resorts — costs £32 a head, half the average price of a ticket at Covent Garden."

Thomson also offers seats at the Met in New York, the Mozart Festival in Strasbourg and at opera houses in Paris, Prague and Vienna as part of its city breaks programme.

Kirker Holidays even expects to sell opera-linked packages to cities that are not in its brochure. "Those who want to enjoy Verdi in Parma this winter or *Turandot* in Bologna can book tailor-made packages with us," Christopher Kirker, the managing *director, says.*

"We offer an increasing number of activities for those taking city breaks, but opera remains a favourite. Enthusiasts are seeking Italian opera sung in Italian and, obviously, Italian opera houses are the best place to go."

Jonathan Blizard of JMB Travel, the Worcester firm specialising in opera tours, adds: "We have noticed a big increase in requests for information from new clients, while regular ones are planning to travel to more than one venue next year.

"Italy is always the favourite for opera lovers, but there has been a huge increase in the numbers travelling this year to attend opera in Germany and Scandinavia, especially the Savonlinna Festival on the Finnish lakes."

JMB's prices for two-night breaks in Verona, including good seats at the opera on both evenings and return flights, start from £589 a person.

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Papin puts health of daughter before Villa game

BY RUSSELL KEMPSON

JEAN-PIERRE PAPIN has been there, seen it and done it, with France, Marseilles, AC Milan and Bayern Munich. At the end of the month, though, he faces a dilemma that renders almost irrelevant his glittering career.

Papin, 33, now plays for Bordeaux, who drew 0-0 with Aston Villa in the first leg of their Uefa Cup first-round tie in the Stade Lescure on Tuesday. He played a vigorous role, as the hard-worked Vil-a defenders will testify, but he is not sure about his availability for the return at Villa Park on September 30.

The day before that match, Papin's daughter, Emily, 7, is due to travel to the United States for her six-month check-up on a rare brain disorder. Depending on the advice of the medical specialists, Papin may travel with her and miss the game.

"It all depends on what the doctors say," he said yesterday. "It is up to them to decide whether I need to be with her or not. If they say I do, I will go; if not, then I can play against Villa. It is too early yet to know what will happen."

Papin claimed that he had been offered the opportunity to play for Manchester United last season, alongside Eric Cantona, his friend and former France team-mate. Family considerations came first, though. "I didn't want to be too far away from Emily," he said. "I had to think about that above everything else."

Bordeaux showed enough on Tuesday to demonstrate that, with or without Papin, they still have a realistic chance of reaching the second round. But for Villa's resilient defence and the agility of Mark Bosnich, the goalkeeper, they could have built a good lead for the second leg. They also twice struck a post.

"We did not have the luck," Papin said. "We made the chances, but it would not work for us. If we can play with the same organisation, the same patience, then we still have a very good chance. I would be happy with 1-1, to go through on the away goals rule."

Brian Little, the Villa manager, said: "We knew we didn't have to do too much. We just had to be careful, be cagey and not do anything silly. That's what we did."

FOOTBALL: ENGLAND RECALL BECKONS AFTER COMPELLING UEFA CUP DISPLAY

McManaman turns on style

BY DAVID MADDOCK

SITTING huddled at the back of the main stand at Celtic Park on Tuesday night was an interested observer. John Gorman, the England assistant coach, had a specific task as he took in the Uefa Cup tie between Liverpool and Celtic. Gorman's brief, from Glenn Hoddle, was to watch Steve McManaman and assess the Liverpool midfield player's form. Further, and perhaps more significantly, he was also asked to judge the state of mind of McManaman in the build-up to England's World Cup qualifying match in Italy next month.

There is a history between McManaman and Hoddle. Where Terry Venables, Hoddle's predecessor as England coach, recognised the young man's rare talents and used them within the structure of his team, Hoddle has largely spurned the Liverpool player.

In ignoring him for the squad that faced Moldova on Wednesday last week, Hoddle took his indifference a step further. The England coach suggested that McManaman had been left out because of the unsettling influence of Barcelona's ill-fated advances for his services. But to those close to the England coach, there seemed to be a different agenda.

Hoddle has yet to be convinced by McManaman and was, apparently, far from happy that the player required extensive corrective treatment during the summer on a knee problem that forced him to miss England's tournament in France.

While Hoddle has yet to discover a role in which he can accommodate the Liverpool player, the fact remains that McManaman possesses the technique and talent that is generally lacking in the English game and it would be a foolish man who ignored such talent for a long period.

Gorman was not disappointed on Tuesday night. He witnessed some of the frustrations of McManaman, but also a glimpse of his real genius as he produced a breathtaking goal under real pressure to turn the all-British tie on its head in the last minute of the match.

What Gorman learnt was that McManaman has desire, that he thrives on the big game atmosphere. Gorman was quick to concede the point.

"I thought Steve scored a magnificient goal and I was really impressed by the way he played. He's a geniune player who works hard and gives everything and you could see that he really wanted to win during the game," Gorman said.

"McManaman is my type of player. I like his attitude and I was impressed by what I saw against Celtic. What he has to do now is keep producing performances at that level and then he will have his opportunity with England."

McManaman, for his part, needed that goal, as much to silence the ludicrous allegations that have been hurled his way in recent times. Consider this: a week after he was the subject of a £13.5 million bid from Barcelona, it was suggested that his career was in ruins.

What McManaman had to do, though, was restate the reason why Barcelona, one of the world's biggest clubs, wanted him. He did so on Tuesday night, with that goal, and it would have been interesting to note the reaction of Louis van Gaal, the Barcelona coach, had he watched the game on television. McManaman knows he needs moments like that if he is to resurrect his England career.

"I want to play for England more than anything and I was disappointed to be left out," he said, "but I understand Glenn Hoddle's reasoning. No player has the right to be in the squad. He must earn it by producing the performances and that is my aim. I know I have to play well consistently and that is the only thing I'm concentrating on. The goal was a bit special, but it was significant more for the fact that it brought Liverpool back into the tie after we had lost our way a little."

McManaman's goal belatedly illustrated what is a significant gap between Liverpool and Celtic. The Scottish club have passion and commitment, but it is all too painfully obvious they have a side which is beginning to lag behind the European elite.

As Wim Jansen, their coach, conceded yesterday, they are underdogs for the return leg at Anfield in two weeks. "Of course Liverpool are favourites and it will be very difficult for us now," he said, "but then who knows in football? We will have to go there and score and we will have to give it everything. My players gave everything on Tuesday night and I was happy with their performance. If we can repeat it at Anfield, then we still have a chance."



McManaman is congratulated by Riedle after his stunning equaliser against Celtic. Photograph: Ian Stewart

Wright hearing today

IAN WRIGHT, the Arsenal and England forward, will appear before a Football Association three-man commission today to answer a misconduct charge after a mêlée that followed the FA Carling Premiership match between Leicester City and Arsenal at Filbert Street last month.

Patrick Vieira, of Arsenal, and Pat Rice, the assistant coach, plus Steve Walsh, of Leicester, will also face the hearing.

☐ Ireland have been granted permission by Fifa to stage a World Cup play-off at Lansdowne Road, Dublin, on November 16, a day later than planned, because of a rugby union international at the ground. Ireland are almost certain to reach the play-offs.

Passion play puts Leicester on centre stage in Europe

Rob Hughes savours the survival of traditional English strengths

Whatever happens when Leicester City meet Atlético Madrid again, in the second leg of their Uefa Cup tie on September 30, the English club has gone through the culture barrier. Leicester, neither humiliated nor yet beaten by an Atlético side built to the tune of £50 million, only trail by 2-1 and have shown again that, with the right passion and commitment, English teams can bridge the gulf in continental technique.

Leicester led Atlético for almost an hour by playing to the very limits of their lung-power and ability. They lost to a darting thrust of brilliance by Juninho and a contentious penalty.

That is part of the culture that Leicester, having a second attempt at Europe 36 years after the first, have to learn quickly. Steve Guppy, working tirelessly to defend from his wing, left his foot invitingly in the path of Geli and, as Leicester later bemoaned, the Spaniard was looking for that possibility before diving to ground with more than enough theatre to convince the Norwegian referee that it was a penalty.

There is no use complaining on away trips, certainly not with a referee who had earlier lacked the courage even to blow for a foul when Daniel Prodan had tackled from behind, slicing a five-stitch wound into the calf of Ian Marshall, the Leicester forward.

To Neil Lennon, that was unfair, but he will have to show rather more restraint than he showed in Madrid on Tuesday night. Among the dreadfully low 23,000 crowd were almost 3,000 Leicester supporters, first-footing in Europe every one. Also there, larger than life, was Jesus Gil y Gil, the Athlético president.

The man who matches gargantuan generosity with abrasive impatience sits on what appears to be a football throne in the Vicente Calderón Stadium. However, appearances can be misleading.

Outside, the stadium has an impressive façade, inside it is shabby and lacking English comforts, English safety and facilities. It is like a designer label, the stadium and the team bought expensively for show, but in reality not an awful lot superior to a side built on the cheap, like Leicester.

Juninho, having escaped from Middlesbrough to the Spanish capital, slipped the shackles of Pontus Kaamark, Leicester's Swedish defender, only four times. Although Juninho later admitted that he feared Leicester would deny him, as they did in winning the Coca-Cola Cup final last May, the Brazilian mannequin turned the match with his brilliant ground control, his acceleration, his innate sense of half an opportunity.

Relief for Atlético — and relief, too, for Raddy Antic, the former Luton Town player who is now their coach. Had he lost, who knows whether Gil's patients would have lasted; in a victory that laced beauty with spite, Antic is reprieved ... though two Spanish club managers, Jorgé Valdano, at Valencia, and Vicente Cantatore, at Real Valladolid, were summarily sacked on Tuesday, three games into a new season.

It is a habit that crosses all boundaries, though Cantatore contributed to his own downfall by arguing with his president on television last weekend.

The name of Bobby Robson, presently attached to Barcelona, crops up in the Spanish speculation and he is reported to be house-hunting in Lisbon, preparing to coach Benfica, his third Portugese club.

SHEEHAN on BRIDGE

BY ROBERT SHEEHAN, BRIDGE CORRESPONDENT

Sometimes you see a play which has no effect on the contract, yet it has class written all over it. (Rather like watching Gazza nutmeg the full back at the corner flag.) This is another hand from the Deutsch-Nickell final of the American trials.

Dealer West — Love all — IMPs

	♠AK73 ♥A1065 ♦QJ ♣QJ2	
♠652 ♥Q42 ♦1062 ♣A873	N W E S	♠J9 ♥KJ8 ♦K93 ♣K9654
	♠Q1084 ♥973 ♦A8754 ♣10	

S	W	N	E
—	Pass	1 C (1)	Pass
1 S (2)	Pass	3 S	Pass
4 S	All Pass		

Contract: Four Spades by South. Lead: two of spades

(1) The opening bid you have to make if you play five-card majors and a weak No-Trump.
(2) The US style is for North to rebid 1 NT if South responds One Diamond: thus if the responder is worth only one bid he shows his major, to find a possible 4-4 fit.

South was Michael Rosenberg, who used to play his bridge in Britain. He won the spade lead in dummy and led a club towards the ten. You can see his reasoning: he hoped West would win with an honour, and then he could subsequently ruff out East's club honour for a heart discard, before going about his business in diamonds.

Bob Hamman was East. When the low club was led from dummy, he went in with the king, and switched to a heart. It's not even clear that this is the best defence; had he continued trumps, Rosenberg would have had to play diamonds immediately. But as an exhibition of divining the club and heart position at trick two, without much information, it is outstanding.

It meant that Rosenberg had to lose three tricks in hearts and clubs rather than two, and he needed the lucky lie of the diamonds to make his contract.

☐ For details of *The Times* Midland Private Banking National Bridge Challenge, call the organisers on 0181-942 9506.

☐ Robert Sheehan writes on bridge Monday to Friday in Sport and in the Weekend section on Saturday.

KEENE on CHESS

BY RAYMOND KEENE
CHESS CORRESPONDENT

Decisive game

Today's game was the decisive one in guaranteeing the United States championship title for grandmaster Joel Benjamin. This year, the US championship had a curious qualifying system: in early rounds, grandmasters Yasser Seirawan and Walter Browne were eliminated, leaving Larry Christiansen and Benjamin to contest the final. After three games, the score was level but after Benjamin's win in game four (given today) Christiansen was unable to catch up.

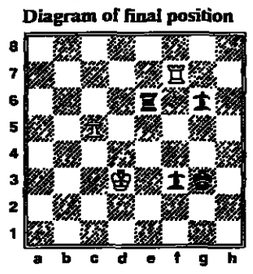
White: Larry Christiansen
Black: Joel Benjamin
US Championship
September 1997

Pirc Defence

1	d4	d6
2	e4	Nf6
3	Nc3	g6
4	Nf3	Bg7
5	Bf4	0-0
6	Qd2	Bg4
7	0-0-0	c6
8	Bh6	Qa5
9	Kb1	Nbd7
10	Be2	e5
11	Bxg7	Kxg7
12	h3	Bxf3
13	Bxf3	b5
14	g4	Nb6
15	h4	Nc4
16	Oc1	Rab8
17	dxe5	dxe5
18	h5	Ng8
19	hxg6	hxg6
20	Be2	Rfd8
21	Bxc4	bxc4
22	Rxd8	Qxd8
23	f4	Qd4
24	Ka1	ed4
25	Qxf4	Re8
26	a3	Qe5
27	Qe3	Re7
28	g5	a5
29	Ka2	Re6
30	Rh4	Re8
31	Rh1	Ne7
32	Rf1	Nf5
33	Qf2	Nd6
34	Qf6+	Qxd6
35	Rxd6	Nxe4
36	Nxe4	Rxe4
37	Rxc6	Re5
38	Rxc4	Rxg5
39	b4	axb4
40	axb4	f5
41	b5	f4
42	Rc7+	Kf6
43	b6	Ra5+
44	Kb3	Rb5+
45	Kc4	Rxb6
46	Kd4	Kf5
47	Kd3	Re6
48	Rf7+	Kg4
49	c4	f3
50	c5	Kg3

White resigns

Diagram of final position



Times book

The Times Winning Moves 2 contains 240 chess puzzles from international grandmaster Raymond Keene's daily column in *The Times*, and is available now from bookshops or from B. T. Batsford Ltd (tel: 01376 321276 at £6.99 plus postage and packing).

☐ Raymond Keene writes on chess Monday to Friday in Sport and in the Weekend section on Saturday.

Arsenal in need of travel insurance

BY MATT DICKINSON

IT IS fortunate for Arsenal — and, indeed, Dennis Bergkamp — that the age of the European League is not yet upon us. The Dutchman's fear of flying would almost certainly render him obsolete and, as his team-mates found out in their 1-0 defeat by PAOK Salonika on Tuesday night, to travel without Bergkamp is to set off across the Continent with no spare tyre and the fuel gauge on red. Danger looms.

Just as his absence in Greece deprived Arsenal of the one man who could link their alarmingly disjointed parts, his return for the second leg of the Uefa Cup first-round tie should restore enough penetration to overcome opponents who never expected to find themselves in such a promising position.

It is a problem, however, that — like Bergkamp's phobia — will not disappear and Arsène Wenger, the Arsenal coach, is contemplating a radical solution if his side progresses in two weeks' time. The trouble is that the remedy — omitting Bergkamp from any FA Carling Premiership on a Saturday preceding a European engagement, so that he can set off early — creates a problem in itself, greatly weakening a championship campaign that Wenger admits is his priority.

"Maybe if it is a very important game, particularly a semi-final or final, I would leave him out on a Saturday so he could travel," Wenger said. "It is difficult. I made my calculations that we could play 60 or 70 games in a season. Because of his thing with planes, Dennis will miss two or three maximum. To get another player like him would be very difficult, so we just have to accept the situation. When he signed his contract, that was a condition and it will not change."

While one Dutchman cannot return soon enough for Arsenal supporters, particularly as they prepare for three Premiership games in a week, against Chelsea, West Ham and Everton, another will be wondering whether he will feature in any of them. Marc Overmars has been substituted in all but one of Arsenal's games this season and departed early on Tuesday after a fitful display. Next time, he may find himself on the bench from the start.

Meldrum tries to put disaster behind him

COLIN MELDRUM, the Kilmarnock reserve goalkeeper, will put the embarrassment of the Coca-Cola Cup behind him tonight as his side searches for European glory in the South of France.

The Scotland Under-21 international looks likely to face Nice in the first round of the Cup Winners' Cup with Kilmarnock's first choice, Dragoje Lekovic, resigned to missing the first-leg tie with an injured knee.

The French side's Stade du Ray will provide Meldrum with the perfect stage to prove that he has buried the memory of the six goals that went past him at Stirling Forthbank Stadium a month ago. The 21-year-old was on the receiving end that night as the first division strugglers caused the shock of this season's Coca-Cola competition by eliminating the Scottish Cup-holders.

Meldrum said: "I was very low after the Stirling game and the first couple of days were difficult afterwards. But it is all forgotten now.

"You just have to start again, get on with it and put things behind you.

"That night wasn't any one individual's fault. It was just one of those games when everything they tried went in."

FOOTBALL RESULTS

AVON INSURANCE COMBINATION: First division: Luton Town 0 Crystal Palace 2

Tuesday's late games

UEFA CUP: First round, first leg: Atlético Madrid 2 Leicester City 1; Bordeaux 0 Aston Villa 0, Celtic 2 Liverpool 2; PAOK Salonika (Gr) 1 Arsenal 0; RC Strasbourg 2 Rangers 1; Trabzonspor (Tur) 2 VfL Bochum (Ger) 1; Betar Jerusalem (Isr) 2 FC Bruges (Bel) 1; Widzew Lodz (Pol) 1 Udinese (It) 0, SC Karlsruhe (Ger) 2 Anorthosis Famagusta (Cyp) 1; SV Salzburg (Austria) 4 Anderlecht (Bel) 3; MTK Budapest (Hun) 3 Alania Vladikavkaz (Russ) 0; Sion (Switz) 0 Spartak Moscow (Russ) 1; Twente Enschede (Holl) 0 Lillestrom (Nor) 1; Steaua Bucharest (Rom) 0 Fenerbahce (Tur) 0, Mouscron (Bel) 0 Metz (Fr) 2; AGF Aarhus (Den) 2 Nantes (Fr) 2; Croatia Zagreb (Cro) 4 Grasshopper Zurich (Switz) 4; Lyons (Fr) 4 Brondby (Den) 1; OFI Crete (Gr) 3 Ferencvaros (Hun) 0, Bastia (Fr) 1 Benfica (Por) 0, Schalke 04 (Ger) 2 Hadjuk Split (Cro) 0; Sampdoria (It) 1 Athletic Bilbao (Sp) 2; Internazionale (It) 2 Neuchâtel Xamax (Switz) 0, Deportivo La Coruña (Sp) 1 Auxerre (Fr) 2, Rapid Vienna (Austria) 1 Hapoel Petah-Tikva (Isr) 0; Real Valladolid (Sp) 2 Skonto Riga (Lat) 0 Vitesse Arnhem (Holl) 2 Sporting Braga (Por) 1, Vitoria Guimarães (Por) 0 Lazio (It) 4

COCA-COLA CUP: Second round, first leg: Blackpool 1 Coventry City 0; Burnley 0 Stoke City 4; Chesterfield 1 Barnsley 2; Fulham 0 Wolverhampton Wanderers 1; Huddersfield Town 1 West Ham United 0; Hull City 1 Crystal Palace 0, Ipswich Town 1 Torquay United 1, Leyton Orient 1 Bolton Wanderers 3; Luton Town 1 West Bromwich Albion 1, Middlesbrough 1 Barnet 0, Notts County 0 Tranmere Rovers 2; Oxford United 4 York City 1; Reading 0 Peterborough United 0, Scunthorpe United 0 Everton 1; Southend United 0 Derby County 1, Sunderland 2 Bury 1; Watford 1 Sheffield United 1; Wimbledon 5 Millwall 1

NATIONWIDE LEAGUE: First division: Crewe Alexandra 0 Port Vale 1. Third division: Cardiff City 0 Chester City 2

VAUXHALL CONFERENCE: Halifax Town 6 Telford United 1; Hayes 1 Cheltenham Town 1, Welling United 1 Stevenage Borough 0

FA CUP: First qualifying round replays: Shotton Comrades 1 Whitley Bay 0; Morpeth 4 Finchley 1; Stocksbridge Park Steels 2 Liversedge 3; Blyth Spartans 1 Spennymoor 0; Dunston FB 2 Bamber Bridge 3; Easington Colliery 4 Harrogate Town 1; Desborough 1 Bridgnorth 3; Slough 6 Baldock 0; Braintree 3 Gravesend and Northfleet 1, Westfields 1 Wokingham 3, Dorchester 1 Oxford City 0; Calne 2 Clevedon 1; Basingstoke 2 Havant 0; Cinderford 0 Weston-super-Mare 1; Woodbridge 3 Northampton Spencer 1; Hoybridge Swifts 2 Chertsey 1; Camberley 2 Banstead 1; Worthing 4 Canterbury 1, Deal 2 Berkhamsted 1; Carshalton 4 Harwich and Parkeston 0; Dulwich Hamlet 2 Bedford Town 0, Abingdon Town 1 Bridgwater 2; Gosport 1 Buckingham Town 2.

UNIBOND LEAGUE: Premier division: Accrington Stanley 1 Colwyn Bay 2, Altrelon 1 Gusseley 1; Altrincham 0 Winsford 1; Chorley 4 Runcorn 2; Leigh RMI 0 Barrow 1; Mamms 1 Radcliffe 2. First division: Buxton 2 Eastwood Town 0; Matlock Town 3 Congleton 0

ICIS LEAGUE: Premier division: Bishop's Stortford 0 Hitchin 2; Boreham Wood 3 Walton and Hersham 0, Bromley 2 Harrow 1; Hendon 3 Chesham 0. First division: Aldershot Town 3 Wembley 1, Barton 0 Leyton Pennant 0; Staines 4 Thame 1, Uxbridge 2 Bognor Regis 1. Second division: Chalfont St Peter 4 Windsor and Eton 0, Hungerford 7 Egham 1; Leighton 2 Horsham 1; Tooting and Mitcham 0 Northwood 1; Wivenhoe 0 Met Police 2. Third division: Ford 1 Corinthian Casuals 1; Wingate and Finchley 2 Hornchurch 2.

DR MARTENS LEAGUE: Premier division: Ashford 0 Crawley 1, Bromsgrove Rovers 3 Worcester 0; Halesowen Town 0 Gloucester City 1

PONTIN'S LEAGUE: Cup: Group one: Bradford 5 Oldham 1.

FA YOUTH CUP: First qualifying round: Yorkshire Amateur 0 Carlisle 4; Cradley 0 Cambridge Utd 5

NORTH WEST COUNTIES LEAGUE: First division: Atherton LR 1 Warrington 2; Darwen 0 Blackpool Rovers 4; Kidsgrove 5 Glossop North End 1; Mossley 1 Newcastle Town 2; Rossendale 2 Chadderton 1; Salford 2 Haslingden 0, Vauxhall GM 6 Atherton Collieries 0.

COURAGE COMBINED COUNTIES LEAGUE: Premier division: Sandhurst 1 Reading 5; Bedfont 3 Hartley Wintney 2; Mersham 2 Chessington and Hook 0; Viking Sports 0 Walton Casuals 0

WINSTONLEAD KENT LEAGUE: First division: Faversham 0 Erith 0; Thamesmead 0 Tunbridge Wells 2

JEWSON WESSEX LEAGUE: First division: BAT 1 Portsmouth RN 1; Bournemouth 5 Whitchurch 0; Wimborne 5 Ryde Sports 0

ENDSLEIGH INSURANCE MIDLAND COMBINATION: Premier division: Bolehill Swifts 2 Massey Ferguson 0, Cheslyn Hay 0 Meir KA 3; Dudley Sports 0 Coleshill 4

UHLSPORT UNITED COUNTIES LEAGUE: Premier division: Boston 5 Bourne 0; St Neots 3 Potton 1, S and L Corby 1 Holbeach 0; Stotfold 2 Hampton 0; Wellingborough 0 Ford Sports 0; Wootton 2 Eynesbury 1

NATIONWIDE GOLD CUP: Section A: Dungannon Swifts 1 Crusaders 3, Lame 1 Glenavon 3 Section B: Distillery 2 Linfield 0, Lurgan Utd 1 Coleraine 4 Section C: Carrick 0 Glentoran 1, Newry 2 Portadown 0

INTERLINK EXPRESS ALLIANCE: West Midlands Police 2 Boldmere St Michaels 3

UNIJET SUSSEX COUNTY LEAGUE: First division: Arundel 2 Burgess Hill 4; Ringmer 2 Redhill 3

NORTHERN COUNTIES EAST LEAGUE: Premier division: Arnold 4 Glasshoughton Welfare 2, Maltby MW 1 Curzon Ashton 0, Pickering 0 Ossett Town 2; Selby 1 Denaby 1, Thackley 1 Eccleshill 2.

MINERVA SPARTAN SOUTH MIDLANDS LEAGUE: Premier division north: Potters Bar Town 1 Milton Keynes 1

JEWSON EASTERN COUNTIES LEAGUE: Premier division: Clacton 2 Tiptree Utd 2, Ely 3 Warboys 0; Felixstowe 0 Lowestoft 0, Gorleston 0 Wroxham 0; Newmarket 2 Heston 4; Sudbury Tn 4 Halstead 1 Walton 1 Great Yarmouth 4

FIXTURES

FOOTBALL

Kick-off 7.30 unless stated

European Cup Winners' Cup
First round, first leg
Chelsea v Slovan Bratislava (7.45)
Nice v Kilmarnock

AVON INSURANCE COMBINATION: First division: Ipswich v Arsenal (7.0); Norwich v Oxford Utd, Queens Park Rangers v Tottenham (at Harrow Borough FC, 7.0).

PONTIN'S LEAGUE: Premier division: Everton v Birmingham (7.0) Cup: Group three: Walsall v Notts County (7.0).

FAI HARP LAGER NATIONAL LEAGUE: Premier division: Dundalk v Bohemians (7.45)

FA YOUTH CUP: First qualifying round: Somersham v Tamworth, Stanway v South End Manor; Southwick v Sittingbourne, Chipstead v Margate, Folkestone Invicta v Three Bridges, Merstham v Whyteleafe; Fisher v Salisbury; Romsey v Fareham.

CRICKET

Britannic Assurance
county championship
10.30, first day of four, 104 overs minimum

DERBY: Derbyshire v Yorkshire
CHELMSFORD: Essex v Middlesex
BRISTOL: Gloucestershire v Lancashire
SOUTHAMPTON: Hampshire v Worcestershire
CANTERBURY: Kent v Surrey
LEICESTER: Leicestershire v Durham
TAUNTON: Somerset v Glamorgan
HOVE: Sussex v Nottinghamshire
EDGBASTON: Warwickshire v Northamptonshire

OTHER SPORT

GOLF: British Masters (at Forest of Arden); Guardian Irish Women's Open (in Dublin)
ICE HOCKEY: Benson and Hedges Cup: Basingstoke Bison v Nottingham Panthers (7.30)
SPEEDWAY: Premier League: Sheffield v Isle of Wight (7.45)
TENNIS: Satellite tournament (in Hull)

WORD-WATCHING

By Philip Howard

SEMICHA
a. A small cup of tea
b. A religious rite
c. Half a beach hut

CHAROSET
a. A fruity mix
b. A runabout
c. A daily cleaner

AUTOPLATE
a. Formula One Trophy
b. A sterilising device
c. Printing equipment

MARIA AGNESI
a. A Fra Angelico painting
b. A mathematician
c. A J. S. Bach sacred cantata

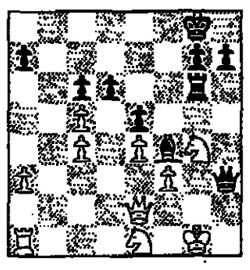
Answers on page 50

WINNING MOVE

By Raymond Keene

Black to play. This position is from the game Biolek — Oral, Argentina 1997.

1 ... h5 would regain Black's sacrificed piece, but he found something more incisive. What did he play?



Solution on page 50

RACING: ASCOT WORKOUT OFFERS FEW CLUES AS GUINEAS WINNER WARMS UP FOR RETURN

Entrepreneur enjoys exhibition round

BY CHRIS MCGRATH

ENTREPRENEUR is alive and well — information which, until his gallop at Ascot yesterday morning, had been exclusive to bleary-eyed spies through the hedges of Newmarket Heath. Unfortunately, his return to the public domain confirmed little else.

Superficially, it was possible to be impressed by the spectacle of the 2,000 Guineas winner stretching half a dozen lengths clear of his working companions in the straight.

RICHARD EVANS

Nap: BERMUDA BOY (4.20 Yarmouth)
Next best: Clerkenwell (2.40 Newbury)

Richard Evans, who napped Abajany (7-1) on Tuesday, followed up with Euro Sceptic (9-2) at Beverley yesterday

But one would have to indulge him Mick Kinane's fairly vigorous riding, while Greville Starkey and Kevin Bradshaw eased their mounts into leisurely admiration.

It soon became fairly clear, moreover, that an invitation to the media had been the price demanded by Ascot for permitting Entrepreneur this reconnaissance prior to the Queen Elizabeth II Stakes on Saturday week, his first race since being turned over at odds-on in the Derby — and not some act of contrition by Michael Stoute, his trainer, for the horse's notorious secret excursion to Sandown in the spring.

Stoute was evidently uncomfortable with the ogling inquisition yesterday. He even declined to identify Entrepreneur's sparring partners, who subsequently were discovered to be Great Child and Crystal Gold, modest handicappers both. Their trainer restricted himself to saying: "We thought he needed a change of scene, as he has done a lot of work at Newmarket on the long road back from the Derby. Now we aim to come back here on Saturday week."

Entrepreneur's coat glinted in the autumn sun which, along with the heavy dew, offered a teasing reminder that it was way back in the spring when his talent had blossomed so briefly. If he now seemed excusably in need of some earnest labour, it was in a mental sense, as much as anything. Kinane detached him during the steady early stages of their work over the Old Mile, but had to pump his elbows to accelerate up the inside as his colleagues cleared a path into the straight.

Entrepreneur, the bulging cogs of his physique working busily but fluently, lengthened away in dutiful fashion. But the gallop, with such humble escorts, had clearly been set up specifically to remind the horse what it feels like to be a champion on a racecourse.

"He strode out well in the last furlong and a half, and got into a nice rhythm," Kinane said. "The signs are positive, but you never really know until you put him back in the ring, back under pressure. He was a little bit rusty, having been off such a long time, but let's hope that will have put the edge back on him. He has got so used to working at home that we wanted to see how he would react back in a racing environment."

Entrepreneur's work in the spring had seduced some of his connections into extravagant talk, but there was a studied prudence to Kinane yesterday. "He was a major disappointment in the Derby, and he's on a recovery mission. Let's hope there are no ill-effects mentally. I wouldn't like to run round Epsom again if I had done a hamstring there."

Stoute's morale will at least have been encouraged when Irish Light won at Sandown later in the day — completing a double for Frankie Dettori, who eroded Kieren Fallon's lead at the top of the jockeys' table to seven (his rival having taken his score to 148 winners with one at Yarmouth).

In the Sandown Futurity Stakes, Dettori had been rather less strenuous than Kinane earlier in the day as Setteen confirmed himself a smart performer in the making.

GILL ALLEN



Kinane puts Entrepreneur through his paces in a workout at Ascot before his return in the Queen Elizabeth II Stakes

NEWBURY

THUNDERER
2.10 Frankie Ferrari
2.40 Arabian Story
3.10 Bollin Joanne
3.40 **CENTRE STALLS** (nap)
4.10 Shaft Of Light
4.40 Shaska

Our Newmarket Correspondent: 2.10 Frankie Ferrari. 3.40 **BINT ALBAADIYA** (nap). 4.40 Summer Dance.

GUIDE TO OUR RACECARD

103 (12) 0-0432 GOOD TIMES 74 (CD,BF,F,G,S) (Mrs D Robinson) B Hall 9-10-0 . B West (4) 89

Racecard number. Draw in brackets. Six-figure form (F — fell, P — pulled up, U — unseated rider, B — brought down, S — slipped up, R — refused, D — disqualified). Horse's name. Days since last outing. J — jumps. F — first time. B — blinkers. V — visor. H — hood. E — Eyeshield. C — course winner. D — distance winner. CD — course and distance winner. 3F — beaten favourite in latest race. Going on which horse has won (F — firm, good to firm, hard, G — good, S — soft, good to soft, heavy). Owner in brackets. Trainer. Age and weight. Rider plus any allowance. Timekeeper's speed rating.

GOING: GOOD TO FIRM — DRAW: 5F-7F, HIGH NUMBERS BEST
TOTE JACKPOT MEETING — SIS

2.10 AMERADA MAIDEN STAKES (2-Y-O: £11,284: 7f) (17 runners)

101	(9)		0	BEAUCHAMP MAGIC 33 (E Penser) J Dunlop 9-0	M Roberts 65
102	(3)			CHRYSOLITE (A Sheikh) B Hills 9-0	T Quinn –
103	(1)			DISTANT MIRAGE (R Tungsley) P Chapple-Hyam 9-0	J Reid –
104	(5)			DR FONG (Thoroughbred Corporation) H Cecil 9-0	K Fallon –
105	(10)			FIRST MASTER (Three's Lucky Partnership) Sir Mark Prescott 9-0	S Sanders –
106	(17)			FRANKIE FERRARI (W Saidi) D Loder 9-0	Pat Eddery –
107	(2)			GRAND SLAM (Mrs D Wight) R Hannon 9-0	Dane O'Neill –
108	(11)			GUILDHALL (Merlyn Racing) B Meehan 9-0	M Tebbutt –
109	(14)			INCEPTA (A Maktoum) B Hills 9-0	W J O'Connor –
110	(8)			MISBAH (H al-Maktoum) B Hanbury 9-0	S Drowne –
111	(13)		4	MUBRIK 21 (H al-Maktoum) J Gosden 9-0	R Hills 74
112	(16)			PANTAR (R & Evans Law & Hardman) I Balding 9-0	L Dettori –
113	(6)			PELAGOS (Munchor Family) R Charlton 9-0	T Sprake –
114	(7)			RAINMAKER (Thurloe Thoroughbreds III) M Jarvis 9-0	Paul Eddery –
115	(4)		5	RED SKY CHARLIE 23 (Maverick Ltd) Lord Huntingdon 9-0	R Cochrane 67
116	(15)			SHANILLO (Piccolo Boys) M Channon 9-0	J Fortune –
117	(12)			SUPERCHIEF (Sir Freddie Laker) Miss B Sanders 9-0	C Rutter –

BETTING: 3-1 Mubrik, 4-1 Dr Fong, 5-1 Distant Mirage, 6-1 Frankie Ferrari, 8-1 Pantar, 10-1 Pelagos, 14-1 Chrysolite, 16-1 others.

1996 NO CORRESPONDING MEETING

FORM FOCUS Distant Mirage, a Caerleon colt out of Desert Bluebell, is a half-brother to Roses In The Snow. Dr Fong is a lively colt out of a mare who was a winning sprinter in the United States. Frankie Ferrari is a half-brother to Total Rush. Mubrik, 5th of 11 to Sadian in 7f at Lingfield maiden (good to soft). Red Sky Charlie, 8l 5th to Magician in 6f Ripon maiden (good to firm).

MUBRIK can put his Lingfield experience to good use

2.40 DOUBLEPRINT ARC TRIAL (Listed race: £31,434: 1m 3f 5yd) (5 runners) — BBC2

201	(1)	2143-21		SWAIN 54 (F,G,S) (Godolphin) S bin Suroor 5-9-9	L Dettori 125
202	(3)	02-6112		ARABIAN STORY 46 (C,F,G) (The Queen) Lord Huntingdon 4-9-2	Pat Eddery 127
203	(2)	20110-1		CLERKENWELL 14 (F,G,S) (Sheikh Mohammed) M Stoute 4-9-2	J Reid 118
204	(5)	2240-53		POSIDONAS 13 (CD,F,G,S) (A Christodoulou) P Cole 5-9-2	T Quinn 115
205	(4)	1442-50		SUNBEAM DANCE 27 (F) (Godolphin) S bin Suroor 3-8-9	R Hills 111

BETTING: 4-9 Swain, 11-2 Arabian Story, 13-2 Posidonas, 7-1 Clerkenwell, 66-1 Sunbeam Dance

FORM FOCUS Swain beat Pilsudski 11 in 1¼m group one King George and Queen Elizabeth Diamond Stakes at Ascot (soft). Arabian Story neck 2nd to Harbour Dues in 1¼m Klampenborg listed stakes (good), previously beat Germano neck in 1¼m listed Newbury stakes (firm). Clerkenwell dead-heated with Samraan in 1¾m Salisbury stakes (good to soft). Posidonas 3¼l 3rd to Maylane in 1½m group III Epsom stakes (good).

SWAIN has obvious chance. Arabian Story can chase him home

3.10 DUBAI AIRPORT WORLD TROPHY (Listed race: £31,795: 5f 34yd) (16 runners) — BBC2

301	(16)	-100000		CROFT POOL 8 (D,F,S) (Countrywide Classics Ltd) J Glover 6-9-4	T Sprake 109
302	(12)	1-00521		MIDNIGHT ESCAPE 5 (D,F,G) (M Ayers) C Wall 4-9-2	S Sanders 118
303	(10)	0-61006		DEEP FINESSE 51 (D,F,S) (J Sims) M Jarvis 3-9-1	Pat Eddery 108
304	(9)	-310002		ALMATY 8 (V,D,F,G,S) (P Saidi) J Gosden 4-9-13	L Dettori 126
305	(18)	0434566		BRAVE EDGE 8 (D,F,G) (Hons Vale Pipe) R Hannon 6-8-13	Dane O'Neill 115
306	(11)	-614104		CYRANO'S LAD 28 (F,G) (M Fowdar) C Dwyer 8-8-13	J Fortune 117
307	(6)	0521331		DASHING BLUE 8 (D,F,G) (Mrs D Allen) I Balding 4-8-13	T Quinn 126
308	(11)	5-21314		MOON STRIKE 19 (BF,D,F,G,S) (A Fourouk) P Howling 7-8-13	R Cochrane 116
309	(15)	6303003		RAMBLING BEAR 9 (BF,C,D,F,G) (Mrs M Hill) M Blanshard 4-8-13	J Reid 109
310	(7)	0660000		SYLVA PARADISE 8 (F,S) (F Grimstead Hands Ltd) C Brittain 4-8-13	M Fenton 109
311	(2)	-056205		EASYCALL 8 (B,D,F,G,S) (Easycall Partnership) B Meehan 3-8-12	M Tebbutt 116
312	(3)	1162-		TIPSY CREEK 393 (BF,D,F) (H al-Maktoum) B Hanbury 3-8-12	R Hills 107
313	(13)	1340635		HEVER GOLF ROSE 4 (D,F,G,S) (Hever RC) T Naughton 6-8-11	Paul Eddery 114
314	(14)	1-13221		BOLLIN JOANNE 8 (D,F,G) (Lady Westbrook) T Easterby 4-8-8	K Fallon 131
315	(5)	216-005		EVENINGPERFORMANCE 28 (CD,G) (Mrs D Blackburn) H Candy 5-8-8	C Rutter 116
316	(4)	0066220		PATSY GRIMES 8 (C,D,F,G,S) (J Grimes) J S Moore 7-8-8	W J O'Connor 111

BETTING: 3-1 Bollin Joanne, 5-1 Dashing Blue, 6-1 Almaty, 7-1 Eveningperformance, 8-1 Cyrano's Lad, 10-1 Midnight Escape, 14-1 Easycall, Rambling Bear, 16-1 Deep Finesse, Hever Golf Rose, 20-1 others.

FORM FOCUS Midnight Escape beat Hopping Higgins ¾l in 5f group III Leopardstown stakes (good). Deep Finesse 1¼l 6th to Averti in 5f group III Goodwood stakes (good to firm) with Rambling Bear (6lb better off) 3¼ 9th. Eveningperformance (8lb better off) 3¼l 10th, Croft Pool (4lb better off) 7l 14th and Almaty (1lb better off) 9l last. Cyrano's Lad ¾l 4th to Coastal Bluff in 5f group 1 York stakes (good) with Eveningperformance (2lb better off) 1¾l 5th, Hever Golf Rose (1lb worse off) 2½l 6th, Croft Pool (5lb worse off) 6½l 11th, Easycall (1lb worse off) 7¼l 12th and Almaty (levels) 18l last. Dashing Blue beat Sharp Hal ½l in 5½l Doncaster handicap (good to firm) with Patsy Grimes (10lb worse off) 4½l 11th and Sylva Paradise (7lb worse off) 12½l 19th. Bollin Joanne beat Almaty (3lb better off) 1¼l in 5f listed Doncaster stakes (good to firm) with Easycall (levels) 3¾l 5th, Brave Edge (levels) 4¼l 6th and Croft Pool (2lb better off) 8½l 9th.

BOLLIN JOANNE can confirm Doncaster running with Almaty

3.40 DUBAI DUTY FREE CUP (Listed race: £32,955: 7f) (11 runners) — BBC2

401	(9)	00-0132		CENTRE STALLS 93 (D,F,G,S) (A Pye-Jeary) R Johnson Houghton 4-9-0	T Quinn 125
402	(11)	-020101		NEUWEST 40 (CD,F,G) (P Green) R Akehurst 5-9-0	S Sanders 101
403	(6)	1123-03		RUSSIAN REVIVAL 110 (C,F,G) (M al-Maktoum) J Gosden 4-9-0	L Dettori 109
404	(8)	2300054		WORLD PREMIER 30 (F,G) (Mrs C Brittain) C Brittain 4-9-0	Dane O'Neill 112
405	(5)	41-144		YALAIETANEE 116 (CD,G,S) (M al-Maktoum) M Stoute 3-9-0	K Fallon 124
406	(2)	-130115		HATTAB 28 (C,F,G,S) (H al-Maktoum) P Walwyn 3-8-11	R Hills 108
407	(4)	-101041		HIDDEN MEADOW 28 (D,G) (G Strawbridge) I Balding 3-8-11	Pat Eddery 127
408	(3)	212-306		MUCHEA 13 (F,G,S) (Albion Investments) M Channon 3-8-11	J Fortune 122
409	(7)	0663616		OMAHA CITY 13 (D,F,G) (B Gubby Ltd) R Cochrane 99
410	(10)	5-10205		SOVIET STATE 39 (G,S) (R Sangster) P Chapple-Hyam 3-8-11	Paul Eddery 86
411	(1)	1-111		BINT ALBAADIYA 89 (F,G,S) (Sheikh A al-Maktoum) M Stoute 3-8-6	J Reid 112

BETTING: 3-1 Bint Albaadiya, 7-2 Centre Stalls, 9-2 Hidden Meadow, Yalaietanee, 7-1 Russian Revival, 10-1 Muchea, 16-1 Hattab, Neuwest, 25-1 Omaha City, 33-1 Soviet State, World Premier.

FORM FOCUS Centre Stalls neck 2nd to Allied Forces in 1m Royal Ascot group II stakes (good to firm) with Hidden Meadow (7lb worse off) 9¾l 10th. Neuwest beat Philistar 2½l in 7f Newmarket handicap (good to firm). Russian Revival 5¼l 3rd to Cyrano's Lad in 6f Lingfield listed stakes (good to firm). World Premier ¾l 4th to Plaistr D'Amour in 6f York handicap (good). Yalaietanee 7l 4th to Desert King in 1m Curragh group I stakes (good). Hidden Meadow beat Poteen ½l in 7f York listed stakes (good) with Hattab (levels) 6¾l 5th. Muchea 8½l 6th to Royal Applause in 6f Haydock group I stakes (good to soft). Omaha City 13l 6th to Inkabah in 1m½l Epsom listed stakes (good). Soviet State 3¾l 5th to Proud Native in 6f Yarmouth stakes (good to firm). Bint Albaadiya beat Bollin Joanne neck in 6f York listed stakes (good).

WORLD PREMIER will be suited by the return to seven furlongs and can spring a surprise

4.10 TRIPLEPRINT HANDICAP (£14,070: 2m) (10 runners) — BBC2

501	(10)	0-42003		GREY SHOT 19 (D,F,G,S) (J Scotty) I Balding 5-10-0	L Dettori 101
502	(4)	00-0105		JIYUSH 69 (F,G,S) (H al-Maktoum) E Dunlop 4-9-11	R Hills 105
503	(7)	/0-4333		CLIFF LINK 15 (F) (Lord Wrenstock) W Hern 7-9-4	Paul Eddery 98
504	(3)	-033113		SHAFT OF LIGHT 8 (V,F,S) (The Queen) Lord Huntingdon 5-9-2	T Quinn 109
505	(5)	5-03043		GO BRITANNIA 24 (F) (S Fredry) D Loder 4-8-13	R Cochrane 99
506	(9)	3004900		STATE FAIR 8 (C,F) (R Richards) B Hills 5-8-11	Pat Eddery 97
507	(6)	1251329		RAFFLES ROOSTER 29 (S) (M Leatham) A Newcombe 5-8-3	S Drowne 90
508	(8)	3041023		STAR RAGE 5 (D,F,G) (J Abell) M Johnston 7-8-2	N Adams 106
509	(1)	4102004		PREMIER NIGHT 8 (C,F,G) (D Charlston) S Dow 4-8-2	S Sanders 106
510	(2)	3365060		FLETCHER 8 (F) (Lady Margadale) H Morrison 3-8-1	R Ffrench (3) 96

BETTING: 3-1 Shaft Of Light, 5-1 Premier Night, 6-1 Raffles Rooster, Star Rage, 7-1 Go Britannia, Grey Shot, 8-1 Jiyush, 10-1 Cuff Link, 14-1 State Fair, 33-1 Fletcher.

FORM FOCUS Grey Shot 15l 3rd to Further Flight in 1m5f Chester handicap (soft) with State Fair (5lb better off) 38l 7th. Jiyush 1¼l 5th to Philanthropp in 1m7f Chantilly listed stakes (good). Cuff Link 3¼l 3rd to Paeolive in 2m Baden-Baden listed stakes (good). Shaft Of Light 4¼l 3rd to Saussalito Bay in 1m5½l Doncaster handicap (good to firm) with Premier Night (levels) 4¼l 4th, State Fair (levels) 13l 9th and Fletcher (levels) 13l 10th. Go Britannia ¼l 3rd to Motet in 2m Newcastle handicap (good). Raffles Rooster 12l 11th to Far Ahead in 1¾m York handicap (good) with Premier Night (4lb better off) 17l 13th. Star Rage 1½l 3rd to High Intrigue in 2m Goodwood handicap (good).

GREY SHOT set too strong a pace at Chester last time, and can return to form here

4.40 BONUSPRINT HANDICAP (3-Y-O: £14,915: 1m 2f 6yd) (17 runners)

601	(7)		2-1	SUMMER DANCE 24 (G) (Cheveley Park Stud) M Stoute 9-7	J Reid 83+
602	(6)		2-44445	KALINKA 24 (F) (Elite Racing Club) P Cole 9-5	T Quinn 92
603	(175)		2231315	YABINT EL SULTAN 13 (D,F,S) (G S D Imports Ltd) B McMahon 9-5	J Fortune 86
604	(10)		31122	WISHING STONE 25 (BF,F,G) (M al-Maktoum) E Dunlop 9-4	K Fallon 92
605	(13)		2231582	SELLETTE 13 (S) (Mrs J Mitsuko) D Haydn Jones 9-4	S Drowne 91
606	(12)		-232221	NIGHTLARK 19 (S) (E Loder) D Loder 9-4	R Cochrane 85
607	(14)		4-10005	GIFT TOKEN 26 (V,F) (Mrs D Ellis) D Chappell 9-4	R Ffrench (3) 93
608	(3)		0105540	MARIE DORA 24 (V,G) (Lord Roborough) I Balding 9-3	M Tebbutt 93
609	(2)		61	SHASKA 20 (D,S) (Sheikh Mohammed) J Gosden 9-1	L Dettori 78+
610	(8)		-401500	HAPPY GO LUCKY 19 (F,S) (Whitcombe Manor) R O'Sullivan 8-13	Dane O'Neill 79
611	(1)		323	KHAZINAT EL DAR 19 (BF) (H al-Maktoum) W Hern 8-10	R Hills 79
612	(16)		10-5002	MY VALENTINA 20 (S) (D Dee) B Hills 8-10	Pat Eddery 85
613	(9)		0060230	MOBILE DANE 13 (S) (Bestbox Partnership) P Harris 8-4	G Parker 76+1
614	(5)		050-013	COME TOGETHER 41 (BF,S) (C Wright) D Arbuthnot 8-3	S Sanders 97
615	(11)		354	SILVER WHIRL 50 (W,M & Mrs E Robins) R Charlton 8-3	T Sprake 78
616	(17)		6123432	ARRIVING 3 (BF,S) (Wick Hall Stud) J Hills 8-1	M Henry (3) 89
617	(4)		1500454	SUN ALERT 16 (V,F) (R Lee) M Pelgrave 7-10	N Adams 92

BETTING: 6-1 Nightlark, 7-1 Shaska, 8-1 Summer Dance, Wishing Stone, My Valentina, 10-1 Sellette, Khazinat El Dar, 12-1 others.

FORM FOCUS Summer Dance beat Red Guard 2l in 1m Newcastle maiden (good). Kalinka 5½l 6th to Saraym in 1¼m Newcastle fillies handicap (good) with Marie Dora (2lb worse off) 8l 9th. Wishing Stone 2½l 2nd to Pomona in 1m Windsor handicap (good to firm). Sellette 1¼l 2nd to Largesse in 1m2½l Haydock handicap (good to soft) with Yabint El Sultan (1lb worse off) 3½l 5th. Nightlark beat Classic Fan a distance in 1½m Chester maiden (soft). Gift Token 3¼l 5th to Lubeq in 1¼m Newmarket handicap (good to firm). Shaska beat Curzon Street 1l in 1¼m Sandown maiden (good to soft). Khazinat El Dar 1¼l 3rd to Sceptre Lady in 1m Sandown maiden (soft). My Valentina 4l 2nd to Yabint El Sultan (7lb worse off) in 1¼m Chester handicap (good to soft) with Sellette (7lb worse off) 2l 6th. Come Together 1¼l 3rd to Running Free in 1½m Salisbury handicap (good to soft). Silver Whirl 2¼l 4th to Chief Monarch in 1m Sandown maiden (good to firm). Arriving neck 2nd to Ile Dichinci in 1¼m Nottingham stakes (good to firm). Sun Alert 13l 4th to Duncombe Hall in 2m Folkestone handicap (good).

SHASKA looks well treated for her handicap debut

COURSE SPECIALISTS

TRAINERS	Wins	Rnrs	%	JOCKEYS	Winners	Rides	%
J Gosden	36	140	25.7	L Dettori	49	236	20.8
S bin Suroor	3	13	23.1	J Reid	57	306	18.6
P Chapple-Hyam	38	170	22.4	K Fallon	8	58	13.8
Mrs C Kellaway	6	30	20.0	T Quinn	31	265	11.7
R Charlton	20	122	16.4	R Hills	13	113	11.5
B Hanbury	8	51	15.7	Pat Eddery	34	304	11.2

AYR

THUNDERER
2.00 Sandside. 2.30 Nautical Warning. 3.00 Halmahera. 3.30 Just Bob. 4.00 Liffre. 4.30 Westminster. 5.00 Relate.

Timekeeper's top rating: 5.00 **MR MIYAGI.**

GOING: SOFT — DRAW: 5F-6F, LOW NUMBERS BEST — SIS

2.00 EAGLE TAVERNS SELLING STAKES (2-Y-O: £3,610: 5f) (12 runners)

1	(1)	3105		SANDSIDE 13 (D,F,G,S) J Berry 9-2	P Fessey (3) 82
2	(5)	5400		BURNT YATES 16 M W Easterby 8-11	T Lucas 80
3	(8)	4130		PATSY CULSYTH 13 (V,D,S) N Tinkler 8-11	Kim Tinkler 101
4	(3)	0		CAROL SINGER 13 M Johnston 8-6	J Weaver 51
5	(7)	000		CD NEWSGROUND 10 M Channon 8-6	K Darley 72
6	(11)	200		GILDERSLEVE 19 J Watts 8-6	J Carroll 74
7	(4)	4005		GREAT LYTH LASS 21 (B) P Evans 8-6	J F Egan 78
8	(6)	5004		*KETTLESING 24 (B) M W Easterby 8-6*	*D Holland 70*
9	(2)	00		PENNY WHISTLE 13 T Easterby 8-6	L Charnock 41
10	(12)	05		POLLY IN PARIS 54 M Meade 8-6	R Bridland (7) –
11	(9)	4405		PRIDE OF BRYN 31 D Smith 8-6	C Lowther (5) 75
12	(10)	0460		SUNSHINE PET 93 J J O'Neill 8-6	A Culhane 57

7-2 Sandside, 5-1 Burnt Yates, 6-1 Gildersleve, 7-1 Great Lyth Lass, 8-1 others.

2.30 HOLIDAY IN AYRSHIRE & ARRAN EBF MAIDEN STAKES (2-Y-O: £4,536: 7f) (14)

1	(7)		0	ARCTIC STAR 8 M Channon 9-0	A Mackay 65
2	(5)			FEARLESS BRAVE C Thornton 9-0	Dean McKeown –
3	(4)			GYPSY PASSION M Johnston 9-0	D Holland –
4	(14)		6	NAUTICAL WARNING 26 M Tompkins 9-0	J Weaver 66
5	(10)			REPTON Mrs A Swinbank 9-0	J Lowe –
6	(6)	3222		REQUESTOR 23 J FitzGerald 9-0	A Culhane 107
7	(11)			RYEFIELD STAR I Berry 9-0	A McGlone –
8	(3)		60	SAINTES 15 W McKinnon 9-0	C Lowther (5) 67
9	(1)		5	WALTON GREY 27 P Evans 9-0	J F Egan 50
10	(8)		2	ARCTIC AIR 40 E Weymes 8-9	K Darley 70
11	(12)		46	DAYBREAK 24 J Watts 8-9	J Carroll 66
12	(13)		0	INDY KNIGHT 29 M Meade 8-9	R Havlin (3) 51
13	(2)		64	MISS VIVIEN 43 Miss L Perratt 8-9	T E Durcan (3) 60
14	(9)		00	SET TRAIL 27 J Hanson 8-9	E Johnson 39

5-2 Requestor, 5-1 Arctic Air, 6-1 Gypsy Passion, 7-1 Nautical Warning, 8-1 Miss Vivien, 10-1 Ryefield Star, Daybreak, 12-1 others.

3.00 TIMEFORM HARRY ROSEBERY TROPHY (Listed race: 2-Y-O: £9,992: 5f) (9)

1	(3)	5101		BABY GRAND 19 (CD,F,G) T Barron 8-11	Kimberley Hart 93
2	(5)	1640		BATSWING 33 (B,D,S) M Meade 8-11	R Havlin 85
3	(1)	2252		BLUE KITE 5 N Littmoden 8-11	J Weaver 97
4	(8)	0154		EASTERN PURPLE 26 (B,BF,F) R Fahey 8-11	J Carroll 98
5	(7)	3112		ELEVENTH DUKE 16 (D,S,S) R Hannon 8-11	K Darley 108
6	(4)	413		FRIAR TUCK 41 (C,F) Miss L Perratt 8-11	J F Egan 85
7	(2)	1132		HALMAHERA 26 (F,S) I Balding 8-11	Martin Dwyer 102
8	(9)	05		EMMAJOLIN 16 A Jarvis 8-6	C Lowther 91
9	(6)	1100		ITS ALL RELATIVE 33 (D,F,G) J Berry 8-6	D Holland 83

3-1 Halmahera, 7-2 Baby Grand, 9-2 Eastern Purple, 6-1 Eleventh Duke, 8-1 Friar Tuck, 10-1 Blue Kite, Its All Relative, 14-1 others.

3.30 ISLE OF ARRAN HANDICAP (£6,483: 5f) (26)

1	(2)	2146		LADY SHERIFF 8 (B,D,F,G) M W Easterby 6-10-0	S Finamore (7) 85
2	(18)	0032		SQUIRE CORRIE 19 (CD,F,G,S) D Chapman 5-9-12	A Culhane 86
3	(1)	2-00		PRIDE OF BRIDTON 97 (D,G) C Thornton 4-9-9	J Carroll 70
4	(17)	1121		GORETSKI 36 (D,F,G,S) N Tinkler 4-9-9	J F Egan 73
5	(23)	0308		SWIND 19 (D,F) P Evans 3-9-1	J F Egan 73
6	(3)	6000		SWYNFORD DREAM 40 (CD,F,G) J Hetherton 4-8-13	J Lowe 64
7	(9)	2233		BRECONGILL LAD 26 (D,F,G) Miss S Hall 5-8-7	J Weaver 90
8	(6)	0001		*JUST BOB 6 (CD,F,G,S) S Austlevell 8-8-7 (7ex)*	Dean McKeown 83
9	(26)	0006		LENNOX LEWIS 10 (D,F) D Nicholls 5-8-6	A Nicholls (7) 73
10	(7)	4454		MANOLO 22 (B,D,F) J Berry 4-8-5	C Lowther (5) 83
11	(16)	3040		AMRON 19 (C,D,F,G,S) J Berry 10-8-4	K Darley 89
12	(5)	4325		JOHAYRO 27 (D,F,G) J Goldie 4-8-3	T Williams 88
13	(21)	0050		NIGHTINGALE SONG 10 (G) M Meade 3-8-2	R Bridland (7) 73
14	(12)	4263		WILLIAM'S WELL 17 (B,D,G) M W Easterby 3-8-2	D Gibson 86
15	(14)	0330		THE WAD 6 (F,G) D Nicholls 4-8-1	Iona Wands (5) 81
16	(22)	0101		DIVINE MISS-P 24 (D,F,G,S) A Jarvis 4-8-1	P Fessey (3) 91
17	(24)	5500		GOLD EDGE 5 (F) M Channon 3-7-11	A Mackay 86
18	(25)	1330		MUNGO PARK 64 (D,F) Mrs J Ramsden 3-7-11	Martin Dwyer 72
19	(8)	1225		CAMONNEUR 19 (B,BF,F) T Easterby 4-7-10	L Charnock 91
20	(11)	0025		PALLIUM 17 (B,D,F,G) D Nolan 9-7-10	K Sked (5) 85
21	(19)	0560		RICH GLOW 32 (CD,F,G,S) N Byrcott 6-7-10	D Wright 88
22	(15)	6405		FLYING HAROLD 7 (F) M Channon 4-7-10	A Polli (5) 78
23	(10)	0600		ANOTHER NIGHTMARE 13 (D,F,G,S) R McKellar 5-7-10	Kim Tinkler 79
24	(13)	3300		LEADING PRINCESS 47 (B,CD,F,G,S) Miss L Perratt 5-7-10	P Bradley (7) 74
25	(4)	00-0		ANOTHER EPISODE 22 (CD,F,G,S) Miss L Perratt 8-7-10	J McAuley (7) 60
26	(20)	5000		SIX FOR LUCK 17 (D,F) D Nolan 5-7-10	N Pollard (7) 59

7-1 Goretski, 8-1 Just Bob, Camionneur, 10-1 Lady Sheriff, Brecongill Lad, 12-1 Squire Corrie, Manolo, Mungo Park, 14-1 others.

4.00 MIKE FLYNN 50TH YEAR BOGSIDE CUP HANDICAP (3-Y-O: £7,158: 1m 7f) (11)

1	(9)	1240		HEART OF GOLD 42 (F) Miss S Hall 9-7	A McGlone 88
2	(11)	2322		LITTLE ACORN 56 (G) S C Williams 9-6	K Darley 90
3	(5)	3213		LIFFRE 30 (B,F) J Gosden 9-5	J Carroll 100
4	(3)	-423		ROYAL CROWN 72 P Chapple-Hyam 9-4	R Havlin (3) 93
5	(1)	5221		*VICKI ROMARA 20 (S) M Johnston 8-13*	*DOUBTFUL 94*
6	(4)	3213		DEAD AIM 13 (F) I Balding 8-12	Martin Dwyer 91
7	(6)	4520		TOI TOI 15 D Arbuthnot 8-11	S Whitworth 78
8	(10)	0046		MARATHON MAID 14 (G) R Fahey 8-9	R Winston (7) 101
9	(2)	5215		NICHOL FIFTY 19 (F) M Tompkins 8-4	D Biggs 93
10	(8)	2116		TARDEN 15 (G,S) K Burke 8-4	J F Egan 87
11	(7)	5000		YOURS IN SPORT 38 J Watts 7-10	L Charnock 79

9-4 Liffre, 5-1 Little Acorn, 6-1 Dead Aim, 13-2 Royal Crown, 7-1 others.

4.30 KILKERRAN AMATEUR RIDERS HANDICAP (£3,095: 1m 2f 192yd) (20)

1	(18)	1000		DOMINO FLYER 10 (G,S) Mrs A Swinbank 4-12-6	Miss L Preston (7) 38
2	(11)	-401		BOLD BUSTER 21 (D,S) I Balding 4-11-13	A Balding 42
3	(2)	8515		SUMMERHILL SPECIAL 19 6-11-11	Miss E Ramsden (3) 35
4	(12)	2120		REX MUNDI 42 (CD,F) P Evans 5-11-10	A Evans (5) 32
5	(6)	3204		MENTALASANYTHIN 17 (C,D,F,G,S) D H Jones 8-11-9	J Delahunt (7) 33
6	(1)	3612		RIGHTY HO 15 (V,S) P Walwyn 3-11-7	Miss S Sanmeeth (5) 42
7	(16)	0655		WESTMINSTER 48 (V,CD,F,S) M Tompkins 5-11-6	M Jenkins (5) 35
8	(5)	-560		ALPINE PANTHER 16 Mrs M Reveley 4-11-3	S Sellers 44
9	(9)	0102		FORZAIR 22 (F) J J O'Neill 5-10-9	R Hale 31
10	(19)	1065		BRAMBLES WAY 26 (F) Mrs M Reveley 6-10-8	N E Jones (7)

New Zealander expands Woodward's coaching regime

ANDRE CAMARA



Woodward, left, and Uttley, the new England partnership, outline their plans after meeting the national squad at Bisham Abbey yesterday

Mitchell raises England's stock

BY DAVID HANDS
RUGBY CORRESPONDENT

ENGLAND'S best rugby union players will take their lead from an Anglo-New Zealand partnership for the next three years. Clive Woodward, who was introduced as the new national coach to an extended squad at Bisham Abbey yesterday, will be assisted by John Mitchell, the former New Zealand backrow forward who has enjoyed such success with Sale.

Two months ago, Don Rutherford, the Rugby Football Union's (RFU) director of rugby, opined that England was not yet ready for the culture shock of a New Zealand coach. He was speaking in the wake of a visit to Graham Henry, the Auckland coach, but now change is all around. "The status quo is not an option," Fran Cotton declared in forthright tones and, as the man charged with leading the country's playing direction for the foreseeable future, he should know.

To a degree, yesterday at Bisham resembled a reunion of England's 1980 grand-slam team. Cotton was joined by Bill Beaumont, chairman of the national playing committee, and Roger Uttley, the new England manager, all of whom played in the pack that year. Alongside them sat Woodward, whose first international season that was, but he rejected utterly the concept that he occupies his new role on the strength of his international career.

"I don't see my coaching record [with Henley, London Irish and, briefly, Bath] as a problem," Woodward said after criticism from Geoff Cooke, the former England manager, that it did not stand up to scrutiny. "Just because you once played for England does not make you a good coach. You have to earn your stripes. The game has changed.

"But we have some superb coaches in England and we will be working as a team of four [with Mitchell and Richard Hill in the A team, whose forwards coach who has yet to be confirmed]. My position is a bit like that of a 19-year-old picked to play for England, which must be a bit of a risk. But you have to take that on board."

It is likely that Rob Smith, from Wasps, will join Hill and Andrew Harriman, the former Harlequins wing, in the A-team management. John Elliott, the RFU development officer, will manage the under-21 team, with coaches still to be confirmed, but Cotton requires that all England's representative teams, down to the schoolboys, identify a national style. "One of the exciting things about this management team is that we have people who are innovators," Cotton said. "We have to develop an English style, not just copy other people."

Cotton and Woodward were unanimous in their praise for the co-operation given by the leading clubs. "I am looking forward to going into the clubs, working through them and spending more time with individual players," Woodward said. "It's very important that the England team does go forward with the clubs."



Mitchell: success

He has spoken to most of the first division coaches as well as with Jack Rowell, his predecessor, and hopes that training sessions — there is a five-year agreement between the RFU and the English Rugby Partnership over the release of players for international duty — can complement club sessions. It was a point stressed by Mitchell, who believes that there are too many demands placed upon the top players.

"We have to be careful we don't flatten the players," Mitchell said. The former Waikato No 8 will have the curious experience of preparing England's forwards for two internationals, on November 22 and December 6, against the All Blacks, but, with a five-year club contract at Sale, he considers himself part of England's coaching structure now and does not necessarily envisage a prompt return to New Zealand at the end of that contract.

"New Zealand are setting the standards and it will be a massive effort if they can sustain their momentum up to the 1999 World Cup," Mitchell said. "The only way to measure ourselves is to play against them and, after December 6, we will know how far we have to go."

Woodward would give no hostages to fortune when invited to discuss his playing style. "I'm very keen on winning," he said, "but it's very dangerous to say we will play in a certain style, you leave yourself wide open. You play according to the strengths of the players you have at your disposal and the next four games represent a massive opportunity. They can't come quickly enough for me."

The squad will be pared to a manageable number before training next Wednesday, but Woodward is in no hurry to appoint a captain. He will discuss with Uttley, who will stand down from his role as chairman of rugby at Wasps, the merits of several candidates, among them Phil de Glanville, the sitting tenant, Martin Johnson, the British Isles captain, Lawrence Dallaglio, Jason Leonard and Tim Rodber. "More than one person could be given the honour over the next two years," Woodward said, "but the captain has to earn his place in the team as of right."

CLIVE WOODWARD

COACH

Born: Ely, January 1, 1956. Played for Loughborough Students, Leicester and Manly (Sydney). 21 England caps.

Played fly half for Harlequins youth and England colts, moved to centre at university and played for Leicester in three cup finals. Outstanding in the 1980 Calcutta Cup match that sealed England's grand slam and toured with the Lions to South Africa in 1980 and New Zealand in 1983

Spent five years playing for Manly. After returning home, began coaching with Henley, London Irish, Bath and England Under-21.

JOHN MITCHELL

ASSISTANT COACH

Born: New Zealand, March 23, 1964. Played for Fraser-Tech, Hamilton, Waikato, Lyons Olympique and Garryowen Uncapped

Outstanding provincial career in New Zealand earned him a place on the All Blacks tour to Britain in 1993, when he captained the midweek XV Led Waikato to a famous Ranfurly Shield win over Auckland that year and also to victory over the Lions.

Became forwards coach to Ireland in 1995-96 and then Sale player-coach after the departure of Paul Turner in 1996. Helped Sale to last season's Pilkington Cup final. On five-year contract with the club.

ROGER UTTLEY

TEAM MANAGER

Born: Blackpool, Sept 9, 1949 Played for Gosforth and Wasps. 23 England caps.

Uttley, head of PE at Harrow School, returns to international duty after a six-year break. His England career, between 1973-80, was disrupted by injury but he played lock, No 8 and, memorably for the unbeaten British Isles in South Africa in 1974, blind-side flanker.

Appointed England coach in 1988 and took them to the final of the 1991 World Cup at Twickenham before standing down; toured Australia as forwards coach to the 1989 Lions

London to capitalise on test of endurance

DAVID POWELL



on the mass appeal of Sunday's triathlon

For Dorando Pietri, read Julie Moss. The earliest abiding image of the marathon is Pietri's collapse towards the finish of the 1908 Olympic marathon and his repeated attempts to pick himself up off the track. Moss is triathlon's legendary martyr.

When the first mass-participation triathlon to be staged in Great Britain is held in London on Sunday, it will mark endorsement of a sport that has long enjoyed large-scale popularity in the United States. The sight of Moss on all fours, crawling exhausted over the last 20 yards of the 1982 Hawaii Ironman triathlon, was enough to make America want to have a go.

The coast-to-coast television coverage of Moss's suffering gave her instant celebrity status and triathlons sprung up all over the United States. Most were shorter than the Ironman's 2.4-mile swim, 112-mile ride and marathon. Soon, the Chicago Triathlon was attracting 5,000 participants.

Britain's answer to Chicago is the London Triathlon, in much the same way that the London Marathon responded to the United States running boom inspired by the New York City Marathon. Michael Smithwick, the event manager, makes no secret of the fact that he is trying to copy the London Marathon's successful formula of mass participation, elite racing and fund-raising. But for police restrictions, the London Triathlon would have challenged Chicago's ownership of the bragging rights to the world's largest triathlon. "They wanted us to walk before we could run," Smithwick said, his event limited to 3,000 with 2,000 turned away. To the untrained mind, the logistical exercise is as daunting as trying to work out a new prime number.

The course incorporates a swim in West India Dock, a cycle circuit out towards London City airport and a run through the streets of Poplar. The race is broken into 12 groups, the first leaving at 7.30am, the last at 12.44pm. Come the peak of activity, the path being woven will be more intricate than the most complicated knitwear pattern.

In the transition park, where competitors switch from one discipline to the next, £3 million worth of bikes will be racked. About 22 tons of racking is being set up. Combing the waters for athletes in difficulty will be 20 divers, five safety craft, numerous canoes and lifeguards. A team of motorcycle "draft-busters" will be out on the cycle course to police illegal drafting — riders taking advantage of the cyclist in front by riding in the slipstream.

For the 66 per cent attempting their first triathlon, learning the rules is as demanding as the training: no drafting, so keep outside the imaginary "box"; regulation helmets only to be worn; numbers to be displayed front and back; security wristbands to be worn throughout; make sure you complete the swim in an hour or you will be fished out; if in difficulty, turn on your back and raise one arm; no cycling in the transition area, etc, etc.

Oh, and do not swallow the water. "United Kingdom inland and offshore waters are not completely safe for swimming, although risks of disease are low," competitors are informed. No nudity, either. The sport cut that out years ago when competitors, in their hurry to change from one discipline to another, were found to be giving free peep shows. Time spent in transition is all part of the race, non-deductable from finishing time. For the novice, speed changing practice should be a part of training. Where the London Triathlon scores over the London Marathon is in the spectator's ability to watch much of the race. All three disciplines start and finish around the transition park and, by using the Docklands Light Railway, vantage points along the route may be reached.

The majority of competitors will be covering the Olympic distance of a 1,500 metres swim, 40 kilometres ride and 10 kilometres run, though some have opted for the sprint or the relay. The course is flat and the best of the elite men should finish inside two hours. The slowest may take seven hours.

While the masses have paid £38 to enter, the elite are being paid. The sport, though barely 20 years old, has a strong professional core and the highest earners can expect to bank $500,000 a year in fees, prize-money and endorsements.

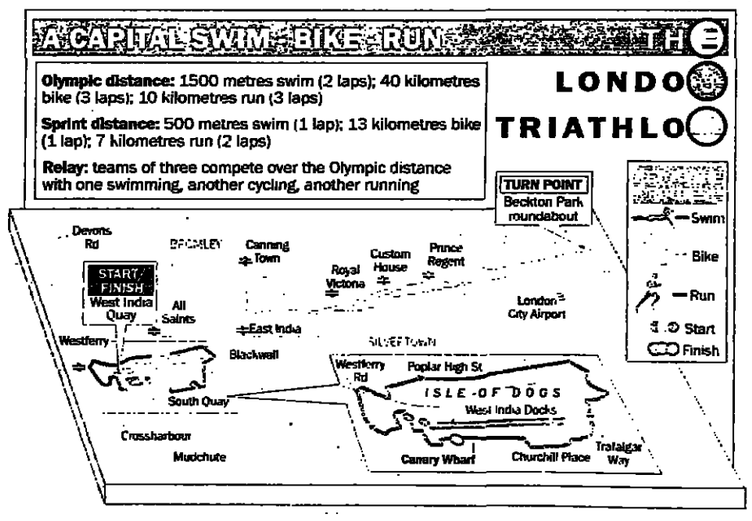
At the very top is Simon Lessing, the Olympic-distance world champion, who, though born and raised in South Africa and living in France, represents Britain. Unless Smithwick is successful in a late attempt to sign Luc van Lierde, the Hawaii Ironman champion, Lessing will start clear favourite.

The elite competitors are exempt from the drafting rule because, when the sport makes its Olympic debut at Sydney in 2000, it will be allowed. The elite athletes insisted on it in London and, as professionals, they have the skills to ride in a peloton without significant risk of crashing. It is fitting that the Forces should be first away, given that a United States naval officer is said to have been responsible for inventing the sport. He did so to settle an argument among colleagues over who was the fittest: the swimmer, the cyclist or the runner. Out of that conversation, the Hawaii Ironman was born.

Now the big ship has crossed the Atlantic. In London, there will be room on board for 3,000, with the promise of more next year. Until he is steering the biggest triathlon vessel in the world, Captain Smithwick will not be wholly satisfied.

☐ *John Bryant is away*

***The Times* will publish the complete list of finishers in The London Triathlon on Monday**



FOR THE RECORD

BASEBALL

NATIONAL LEAGUE: Atlanta 6 San Francisco 4, Houston 15 San Diego 3, Florida 9 Colorado 6; Philadelphia 3 New York Mets 2; Pittsburgh 8 Montreal 2; Chicago Cubs 5 Cincinnati 0; Los Angeles 7 St Louis 6
AMERICAN LEAGUE: Baltimore 2 Cleveland 4 (first game), Baltimore 7 Cleveland 2 (second game), New York Yankees 2 Boston 0 (first game); New York Yankees 4 Boston 3 (second game); Texas 4 Kansas City 2; Anaheim 3 Minnesota 9

BASKETBALL

EUROPEAN CUP: Group match, Hapoel Eilat (Isr) 93 London Towers 81

BOWLS

BLABY, Leicestershire: Teacher's Whisky All-England mixed fours championship: Quarter-finals: Bournemouth (J Belcher, C P and T Sheuning) bt Faccombe Middlesex (S Bradley, A Martell, P Hastings, R Butler) 27-9; Southport (D Moore, S Rennie, V Sayward, A Atkinson) bt Minehead (H and M May, R and J Male) 22-12; North Walsham (J Reylance, A Adams, T Webb, D Ward) bt Essex County and Rayleigh (P and D Else, P and R Cooper) 24-11; Enfield (P Smith, J and G Evans, I Snowdon) bt Consaught and Ongar (S Bloomfield, D and B Manser, J Wilson) 26-3. Semi-finals: Bournemouth bt Southport 17-11, Enfield bt North Walsham 21-17. Final: Enfield bt Bournemouth 22-14.
STOKE COVENTRY: English women's over-55 championships: Singles: Quarter-finals: D Pratt (Hertfordshire) bt I Burton (Suffolk) 21-14, H Knapton (Yorkshire) bt B Arnold (Warwickshire) 21-10, E Fletcher (Dorset) bt P Adams (Derbyshire) 21-12, W Barnard (Devon) bt G Kite (Middlesex) 21-5. Semi-finals: Pratt bt Knapton 21-16, Barnard bt Fletcher 21-13. Final: Barnard bt Pratt 21-10. Pairs. Quarter-finals: J Stevenson and B Blythe (Northamptonshire) bt J Selick and B Farr (Hertfordshire) 24-23; I Balbet and P Launders (Middlesex) bt B Richardson and M Andrews (Yorkshire) 28-10; E Dibden and S Hamson (Hampshire) bt M Moore and A Cox (Warwickshire) 24-15; M Williams and M Rackham (Lincolnshire) bt H Kemmett and J Light (Somerset) 23-18. Semi-finals: Barber and Launders bt Stevenson and Blythe 27-20; Williams and Rackham bt Dibden and Hamson 18-17. Final: Barber and Launders bt Williams and Rackham 23-16.

BOXING

NASHVILLE, Tennessee: International Boxing Federation flyweight championship: M Johnson (US) bt A Almaris (P Rico) pts

CRICKET

SECOND XI CHAMPIONSHIP (final day of three): Old Trafford: Lancashire 462-6 dec (G D Lloyd 228); Lancashire 179 (A Habib 64) and 252 (D Stevens 55); Lancashire won by an innings and 31 runs and are champions.
TOUR MATCH (one day): Perth: Western Australia 276-7 (M Hussey 101); Transvaal 242 (D N Crookes 53); Western Australia won by 34 runs

HOCKEY

MILTON KEYNES: Men's Junior World Cup: Pool A: Australia 8 Cuba 2. Pool B: Pakistan 1 Egypt 1; England 3 Japan 2

SPEEDWAY

PREMIER LEAGUE: Isle of Wight 57 Exeter 33

TABLE TENNIS

ZAGREB: European Women's League. Super division: Croatia 4 England 1

TENNIS

TOKYO: Women's tournament: First round: N Zvereva (Belo) bt J Hasard-Decugis (Fr) 4-6, 6-3, 6-2; Wung Shi-ting (Taiwan) bt N Fujimuta (Japan) 4-6, 6-3, 6-1; S Asagoe (Japan) bt C Rubin (US) 6-4, 6-3; M Endo (Japan) bt C Torrens-Valero (Spa) 6-4, 7-5; M Saeki (Japan) bt H Inoue (Japan) 6-4, 6-4; N Sawamatsu (Japan) bt H Nagyova (Slovakia) 2-6, 6-4, 6-1; M A Vento (Ven) bt P Schnyder (Switz) 6-4, 6-0; L Fang (China) bt M Seles (Spa) 7-5, 7-5. Second round: M Seles (US) bt T Tanasugarn (Thai) 6-1, 6-4
WORLD RANKINGS: Men, 1, P Sampras (US) 4,585pts, 2, M Chang (US) 3,442, 3, P Rafter (Aus) 2,888, 4, Y Kafelnikov (Russ) 2,702, 5, C Moya (Sp) 2,451, 6, S Bruguera (Sp) 2,357, 7, M Rios (Chile) 2,332, 8, G Ivanisevic (Cro) 2,291, 9, A Corretja (Sp) 2,284, 10, G Rusedski (GB) 2,277; 11, G Kuerten (Br) 2,230, 12, T Muster (Austria) 2,229, 13, J Bjorkman (Swe) 2,190, 14, F Mantilla (Sp) 2,144, 15, T Enqvist (Swe) 1,983, 16, P Korda (Cz) 1,980, 17, B Becker (Ger) 1,918, 18, R Krajicek (Hol) 1,903, 19, A Costa (Sp) 1,819, 20, T Henman (GB) 1,725. Women: 1, M Hingis (Switz) 6,855,000pts, 2, J Novotna (Cz) 3,577,000, 3, M Seles (US) 3,482,000, 4, I Majoli (Cro) 3,341,500, 5, L Davenport (US) 3,120,000, 6, A Coetzer (SA) 2,735,000, 7, A Huber (Ger) 2,505,188, 8, M Pierce (Fr) 2,459,000, 9, I Spirlea (Rom) 2,235,760, 10, A Sanchez Vicario (Sp) 2,166,780, 11, C Martinez (Sp) 2,138,230, 12, M J Fernandez (US) 1,902,000, 13, S Graf (Ger) 1,788,000, 14, S Testud (Fr) 1,733,500, 15, B Schultz McCarthy (Holl) 1,670,026, 16, B Paulus (Austria) 1,492,281, 17, R Dragomir (Rom) 1,473,500, 18, K Po (US) 1,404,000, 19, S Appelmans (Bel) 1,379,000, 20, K Habsudova (Slovakia) 1,317,282

POOLS DIVIDENDS

LITTLEWOODS: 22pts £1,001,177.00, 21pts £4,693.45; 20pts £186.65, 19pts £30.25. Half-time 22pts £11,627.90. Four draws £886.65, nine homes £7.10, five aways £9.75.
VERNONS: Possible points 22, no dividend with 22 points. 21pts £13,901.85, 20pts £68.00, 19pts £15.00. Supershots £18.00 paid on three correct. Pennies Ton £181.00 paid on ten correct.
ZETTERS: No 22pts winners, 21pts £2,101.50; 20pts £15.80, 19pts £1.60. Three dividends only — See rule 9(a); four draws (from all eight draws) £202.20, eight homes (neither banker) £7, four aways £45, three draws (from all eight draws) £88.50. Four five £102.90

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GOLF

Road to recovery follows familiar route for Allenby

BY JOHN HOPKINS, GOLF CORRESPONDENT

IT MAY be hard to believe that ordinary 72-hole tournaments still take place in Europe, what with all the fuss lately about captain's selections, Miguel Angel Martín's row with the Ryder Cup Committee, the state of the greens in Switzerland the week before last, the Ryder Cup next week and the players' tournament committee meeting last night at the Forest of Arden.

However, when the One 2 One British Masters starts today at the Forest of Arden, it will be the first tournament to be held for several weeks without any kind of hidden agenda — unless the form of the eight members of the Europe Ryder Cup team who are competing here counts as such.

Robert Allenby is the defending champion, having won after a play-off with Martin — yes, the very same — at Collingtree last year. Allenby captured his third title of the PGA European Tour season at the first extra hole and, when he finished third in an event at Loch Lomond two weeks later, was in with a chance of topping the order of merit.

Then his luck changed. First, he twisted an ankle when doing nothing more energetic than walking to his car at Loch Lomond and then, when he went to southern Spain to recuperate in the sunshine, he was involved in a freakish car accident in which he injured his sternum and cut his face. That was the end of any chance he had in the order of merit, which was won for a fourth year by Colin Montgomerie.

Allenby is thin almost to the point of gauntness and has the look a hunted man these days, as if he is afraid of slipping and twisting his ankle again. Even when he goes to the gym in the hotel, which he did on Tuesday, he moves gingerly, as if walking on ice. Recovering from his various accidents last year took him longer than expected and, after the Masters this year, he hired a personal trainer to speed his recovery.

Though this is the first year that the British Masters has been held on this course, it was here that Allenby won the English Open in June last year. "It is kind of weird defending this event on the course where I won the English Open," Allenby said. "Last year at Collingtree, the greens were not up to scratch and there were problems, but they didn't faze me. That is the attitude to have when things are not going in your favour. You just have to go along with it all. The one who accepts it best will come out on top."

Since the English Open, the 7,134-yard Arden course has undergone some changes. The 1st green has been enlarged by 150 square yards, is more intricately contoured and a new greenside bunker has been added. The 3rd green has been returfed. The most significant change, however, has been to the 5th, a par-three. The green has been moved forward by 25 yards and a new championship tee added. The hole is now 197 yards long.

Elsewhere, the field for the Toyota World Match Play Championship at Wentworth next month does not include Tiger Woods, the Masters champion, even though he is managed by International Management Group, the tournament organiser. It does, however, include Ernie Els, the holder, who has not been beaten in the championship in the three years that he has competed, Colin Montgomerie, Ian Woosnam and Darren Clarke, four of the leading five players in the order of merit in Europe.

Steve Elkington, who won the Players' Championship in March, Phil Mickelson, Frank Nobilo, Jesper Parnevik, Nick Price, Vijay Singh and Tsukasa Watanabe round out the field. The draw will be made on October 7.

Badger has its day before birdie quest

FROM PATRICIA DAVIES IN REFRATH

THE Hennessy Cup begins — chafer grubs and badgers notwithstanding — here, at the Golf und Land-Club Cologne, today, with Helen Alfredsson defending the title. Alfredsson's nationality — she is Swedish — made her a likely winner last year, if only because Swedes have won the tournament since it decamped from Paris to Germany in 1991, but she was carrying a long-term injury and her victory was a tribute to her resilience.

She defeated her compatriot, Liselotte Neumann, the champion in 1993 and 1994, and Trish Johnson, of England, the winner in 1990, in a play-off. "I was in so much pain I don't know how I managed it," Alfredsson said yesterday, fit again after an intricate operation last winter.

Pesky persistence, an Alfredsson trademark, is the answer. It is a trait that has been demonstrated here by a badger, which has gouged lumps out of some of the fairways and driven the greenkeeper, whose course is in otherwise pristine condition, to distraction.

"An unfortunate act of nature," said David Rollo, director of operations for the American Express Tour, who has taken such vagaries in his stride for the past decade. This is Rollo's last tournament before he joins his family in Australia, where he will doubtless learn to cope with exotica such as kangaroos and koalas. A calm, efficient and courteous operator, he will be missed.

Neumann and Annika Sorenstam, the world No 1 and champion in 1995, will be absent this week, reducing the Swedish factor, but the English are here in force, represented by Johnson, Laura Davies, who is keen to add a Hennessy to her résumé, and Alison Nicholas, the US Women's Open champion, who is returning to the fray after three weeks off. There is also Lisa Hackney, who is almost certain to be rookie of the year in the United States, where she is thirteenth on the money-list with over $305,000.

SIMON RIDGWAY



Pearn celebrates the last of his three goals in the 3-2 win over Japan yesterday

Pearn's hat-trick sinks Japan

England	3
Japan	2

BY SYDNEY FRISKIN

MARK PEARN, one of England's bright young hockey prospects, scored all three goals in an exciting victory over Japan on the first day of the sixth Junior World Cup at Milton Keynes yesterday.

Hundreds of screaming schoolchildren acclaimed Pearn's first goal, scored in the nineteenth minute from a solo effort. He added his second five minutes before the interval from a pass by Boyse. Pearn and Boyse took the field as substitutes.

However, it was not all plain sailing for England. Japan thrived on their ability to accelerate at short notice and kept England's defence busy.

Before the game was 30 seconds old, Japan missed a chance to score and, in the tenth minute, they lacked the finishing power to round off another attempt. After Pearn had put England ahead, the Japan goalkeeper prevented Boyse from increasing the lead in the 23rd minute.

A minute later, a rasping shot by Shirikaba, the Japan outside left, hit the crossbar.

England went into the second half with Pearn and Boyce playing prominent roles in attack, but, in the 48th minute, Japan forced a short corner that gave way to a penalty stroke for a foot infringement on the line. Tobita converted with a well-placed shot along the ground.

In the 63rd minute, Pearn scored his third goal, again the chance being set up by Boyse. Japan replied a minute later with a brilliant goal by Yamazaki from Ozawa's forward pass.

Earlier in the day, Pakistan were held to a 1-1 draw by Egypt.

ENGLAND: J Ebsworth, J Evennett, R Irvine, B Garrard (capt), R Stamp, D Haydon, M Johnson, T Mathews, Manpreet Kochar, D Mathews, A Simons. Subs: M Pearn, A Boyse, S Humphries

JAPAN: H Miyoshi; K Fukushi, T Tamaka, D Hokaze, A Hirata, R Asari, N Tobita, T Sakai (capt), M Ozawa, K Yamazaki, Y Shirikaba. Sub: R Harada

Umpires: S Qureshi (India), E Silvano (Italy)

Adventurers in search of wider horizons

Michael Calvin *measures the driving forces behind the Whitbread round-the-world race*

Why? The question has an awful simplicity, an irritating logic, to anyone preparing to sail around the world. There is no simple answer that can fully explain the basic instinct that drives people to confront fear, fatigue and elemental forces beyond the imagination.

There is something obsessional about the ambition that Jez Fanstone will fulfil on Sunday, when he leaves the Solent on *Silk Cut*, the British entry in the Whitbread round-the-world race. He accepts the best crew in such an attritional event will be greater than the sum of its constituent parts, but nevertheless embodies the power of individualism.

He learnt to sail on a reservoir beneath Concorde's flightpath into Heathrow and took a three-year sabbatical from the sport while he studied philosophy and sociology at York University. In the decade since graduation, his life has been dictated by a dream.

He worked as a builder's labourer, stacked supermarket shelves at night and learnt the practicalities of sailmaking as he progressed through the ranks to the 1992 Olympic squad. He yearned for the wider challenge of long-distance racing and made the breakthrough when he built and skippered *Sticky Fingers*, the world's first Whitbread 30.

"The great thing about ocean racing is that your horizons are unbounded," he said. "We have a common philosophy of life. We're a tight, compact group with a common goal and common respect. None of us are the type who sit back and let the world go by."

Lawrie Smith, the skipper, inevitably attracts most of the attention. His reputation as Britain's best all-round sailor is ultimately a by-product of his instinct for complementary talent. He commands unquestioning loyalty, but relies heavily on his No 2, the loquacious Irishman, Gordon Maguire.

Maguire takes a childish pleasure in what he calls the "black art" of mastering the unseen forces of wind and water. "It stretches right across the emotional spectrum," he said. "The Whitbread can be ten times more boring than the most boring thing you have ever done, but ten times more exciting than the most exciting thing you have ever done."

Just as Smith acted as Maguire's mentor, Maguire has overseen the development of Steve Hayles, at 24 the youngest navigator in the history of the race. He has written the boat's computer software programme and compiled sail-testing data that is so sensitive it is protected by a codeword known only to three people. His perspective is, inevitably, distinctive.

"I love the mental challenge, the physical and psychological test of maintaining the highest standards for 30 days at a time," he said. "For me, it is first and foremost an intellectual exercise. Having to keep mentally alert, for so long at one stretch, really appeals to me.

"A lot of raw numbers come off these boats and it is my job to make sense of them. People have this romantic notion of us as adventurers, but it is a very technologically-advanced sport."

The dangers are, however, very real. Jan Dekker, who worked as a diamond diver off the beaches of South Africa and Namibia, doubles as bowman and medic on *Silk Cut*. He has developed a well-defined sixth sense for trouble.

"You learn to accept that you are vulnerable," he said. "You're continually under pressure, continually being tested, because when something goes wrong, you're expected to deal with it. If you get a drop wrong, it can be a big, expensive mess. Sails can be torn. Someone can get hurt.

> 'One day I'll settle and heed the call of normality'

"You can just feel when things are not quite right, even if the numbers suggest to the driver that things are OK. It's all about being practical, making the best use of your experience."

The tension can be corrosive. Tim Powell, who, like Hayles, sailed on the underfunded *Dolphin & Youth* boat in the last Whitbread, understands the value of tolerance. "You've got to reach a level where, if someone is told he's not doing something quite right, he accepts the criticism because he respects the people around him," he said.

"I've been in crews where the slightest suggestion has caused people to take offence, or flounce off and sulk. You've got to be fairly relaxed."

Adrian Stead does just that, despite those who question his rejection of the comforts of conformity. He is a chartered accountant who has abandoned a lucrative directorship to sail with Smith. "I'm sure that one day I'll settle down and heed the call of normality," he said, "but I've made the choice between making a lot of money and sailing . . ."

His beatific smile suggested no further explanation was necessary. Ask why, and you won't understand the answer.

DRUGS IN SPORT: SWIMMER HEADS CAMPAIGN AGAINST EAST GERMANS

Davies demands 1980 gold medal

BY JOHN GOODBODY

SHARRON DAVIES is leading a campaign by competitors from Great Britain demanding retrospective recognition as Olympic champions and world and European record-holders in the light of growing evidence of drug-taking by former East German rivals. Files kept by the Stasi, the East German secret police, have revealed the extent of state-sponsored drug-taking. Former competitors, coaches and doctors of the communist regime are now admitting their guilt in a series of court cases in Germany.

Davies said yesterday: "How can world records or medals won or set by known drug offenders stay in place now we know the truth? If we don't intend to play by the rules, why bother to have the rules at all?"

Davies, who was second in swimming's 400 metres individual medley at the 1980 Olympic Games to Petra Schneider, of East Germany, has asked to be recognised as the 1980 Olympic champion.

Dr Neil Townsend, the vice-chairman of the British Olympic Association (BOA), said: "We have a moral duty to support any British competitor who believes he or she had been unfairly dealt with during the Olympic Games. The BOA will be writing to the International Olympic Committee to support their case."

In athletics, Thomas Schönlebe, the East German who is shown in the Stasi files to have been aided by drugs, holds the European 400 metres record of 44.33sec. Iwan Thomas, of Great Britain, has run 44.36sec and Roger Black, 44.37sec. Marita Koch, still the women's world record-holder over 400 metres, with 47.60sec, is also named in the archives.

Leading batsman charged

IN BRIEF

INZAMAM UL-HAQ, the Pakistan cricketer, has been charged with assault in Toronto after his confrontation with spectators at a Sahara Cup match against India. Tournament and team officials confirmed that the 27-year-old batsman had voluntarily surrendered to police, who charged him with assault with a weapon and two separate counts of assault.

☐ Lancashire have dropped out of the chase to sign Shane Warne, the Australia leg-spinner. Wasim Akram will remain the club's overseas player next season.

☐ **Bowls:** The Teachers Whisky All England mixed fours championship at Blaby turned out to be something of a family affair yesterday when Gordon Evans and his wife, Joyce, partnered their Didcot clubmates, Pat Smith and Ian Snowdon, to a 22-14 win over Tony Shearing, his wife, Christine, and brother, Peter, plus Joan Belcher, of Bournemouth.

☐ **Rugby league:** St Helens yesterday signed Brett Goldspink, 25, the Australian prop forward, on a free transfer from Oldham Bears. Andy Northey left Knowsley Road at the same time to return to rugby union. He has signed a two-year agreement with Northampton in a £50,000 transfer.



CRICKET: WELSH COUNTY READY TO TAKE FINAL STEP ON ROAD TO HOME RULE

Glamorgan relish power play

BY ALAN LEE, CRICKET CORRESPONDENT

GLAMORGAN have not won the county championship since the year that Prince Charles was invested as Prince of Wales. In 29 summers, the world has moved on apace, even if the championship has not, and it is symbolic that the county should begin the match that could bring the title back to Wales on the day that the country votes on devolution.

For Glamorgan, even the involvement is special. In 1970, the year after their championship season, they finished second. Since then, they have been no higher than eighth for 25 out of 26 seasons. Six times, more than any other county in the same period, they have finished bottom of the table.

Having come so far, however, Matthew Maynard's side are not inclined to settle for a gallant near-miss. Given equitable fortune with the weather, which has cost them more than one likely victory, they would surely be entering the final round with a commanding lead. Instead, they have a single point to spare over Kent, with whom they have traded the high ground all season.

There has never been more than a few points between them and, having finally shaking off the valiant pretence of Gloucestershire and a late charge from Yorkshire, they have turned this concluding week into a private duel. Glamorgan must go to Taunton aiming for maximum points: anything less will open the way for Kent to take the title by beating Surrey at Canterbury.

As both teams have won seven games, it is conceivable that the title could be shared for the first time in 20 years. In 1977, Kent were involved again, finishing tied with Middlesex after a titanic final round. The next year, they took the championship outright, for the sixth and most recent time.

Alan Ealham, the 1978 captain, will be at Canterbury today, not only to support his son, Mark, but in the hope that the modern Kent team will not enhance their reputation for failing to finish what they have started. Already they have flopped in the final of the Benson and Hedges Cup and lost the Axa Life League on its last day. To miss out on the championship as well would be difficult to bear.

Kent are opposed today by a team with a tendency to play fatalistic cricket when their chance of honours has gone. It will be a decimated team, too, stripped by injury of Adam Hollioake, Martin Bicknell and Chris Lewis, though as Kent have to resolve doubts over their own new-ball pair, that may only even things up.

Dean Headley will not play, the hip condition that continues to trouble him having ended prematurely a season of mixed promise and anxiety. Martin McCague, although less than 100 per cent fit, is likely to return.

It is in the overseas player area that Glamorgan have the advantage. Waqar Younis is fit and fully motivated for the game against Somerset, but Kent must get by without Paul Strang, who is back in Zimbabwe preparing for a Test match against New Zealand. Kent, indeed, will probably do without spin altogether, which may give some clue as to the texture of the Canterbury pitch.

Glamorgan will need to bat at their best to secure maximum bonus points, so Steve James's duel with Andy Caddick will be central, for more than one reason. James, already named as the Professional Cricketers' Association player of the year, is in a three-way race with Mark Ramprakash and Graham Thorpe for the Whyte & Mackay batting award, while Caddick heads the table for the bowling prize.

James brought a staggering record into the championship run-in. Before the match at Leicester, late last month, his sequence of scores read 162, 69, 130, 103 and 113. Since then, he has managed 14, 21, 16, 28, 2 and 4. He is too good a player for such a slump to continue and his form will be crucial today.

In 1969, Glamorgan won the title through the dependability of that masterful slow bowler, Don Shepherd, and their left-handed opener, Alan Jones. Robert Croft is still aspiring to the heights of Shepherd, his mentor, and James could be a latter-day Jones. This, without question, is the strongest Glamorgan side for three decades, probably the strongest in the championship this summer. If they hold their nerve and are blessed by the weather, they can gain due reward.



James will be hoping to rekindle his imperious form for Glamorgan at Taunton

TABLE

	P	W	L	D	Bt	Bl	Pts
Glamorgan (10)	16	7	2	7	46	53	232
Kent (4)	16	7	4	5	43	56	231
Yorkshire (6)	16	6	2	8	38	53	212
Warwicks (8)	16	7	2	7	30	49	212
Middlesex (9)	16	7	4	5	30	52	209
Worcs (7)	16	5	3	8	45	50	204
Glouces (13)	16	6	6	4	33	56	197
Surrey (3)	16	5	4	7	39	48	188
Essex (5)	16	5	6	5	37	51	183
Lancashire (15)	16	5	6	5	33	50	178
Somerset (11)	16	3	2	11	36	60	177
Leics (1)	16	3	1	12	36	50	170
Notts (12)	16	4	3	9	22	53	166
Hampshire (14)	16	3	4	9	39	41	155
Northants (16)	16	3	5	8	30	45	147
Durham (18)	16	2	7	7	22	52	137
Derbyshire (2)	16	1	9	6	38	55	117
Sussex (12)	16	1	10	5	21	55	107

☐ Worcestershire's and Kent's record includes eight points as side batting last in match where scores finished level

(Last year's positions in brackets)

REMAINING FIXTURES: Today: Kent v Surrey, Somerset v Glamorgan

Russell nears milestone

JACK RUSSELL needs one dismissal in Gloucestershire's final match of the season to become the 23rd wicketkeeper to reach 1,000 in first-class cricket. His striking-rate of 2.72 victims per match makes him the highest on that list (Bill Frindall writes).

Of Russell's 999 dismissals to date, two were held in the field, at fine-leg and mid-wicket, against a Minor Associations' XI on England's 1991-92 tour of New Zealand.

The England and Wales Cricket Board has appointed Simon Pack, 53, a former Nato commander for the western Mediterranean, as its international teams director. The new post carries responsibility for the overall administration of the England, England 'A' and England Under-19 teams.

LEADING WICKETKEEPERS

	Career	Matches	Total	Ct	St	Per match
R C Russell	1981-	366	999	891	108	2.729
F H Huish	1895-1914	497	1310	933	377	2.635
A P E Knott	1964-85	511	1344	1211	133	2.630
R W Taylor	1960-88	639	1649	1473	176	2.580



Bennett prepares the way for Gatting's succession

IT IS not only distinguished and journeymen cricketers who are taking their leave of the game this week. Jack Bond and Barrie Meyer officiate for the last time in a fixture involving their former counties, Lancashire and Gloucestershire, and Don Bennett, the longest-serving coach in the country, is also retiring. His county, Middlesex, are seeking an Australian to replace him — but only for a season.

John Buchanan, the coach of Queensland, has been approached. The idea is that Mike Gatting will succeed him. "I will be very disappointed if he [Gatting] does not do the job after he has played on for one more season," Bennett said, "and I think in the long term Mike will be appointed by England. Since I started coaching the first team in 1969, he has been the player who has stood out. I rate him as a captain as highly as Mike Brearley."

Bennett, who is 63, has been with Middlesex since 1950, when *Wisden* recorded that "Titmus (17) and Bennett (16) showed skill for their ages". He also played football for Arsenal and Coventry City.

In Bennett's playing days as a medium-pace bowler, Middlesex won nothing. Since he became coach, they have acquired 14 trophies. No wonder the committee is honouring him with a dinner in November.

"I have thoroughly enjoyed it, but two things concern me in particular," he said. "Players are moving around for ridiculous money and the practice facilities on county grounds are worse now than they were when Sir Donald Bradman emphasised how important this was in 1948. Lord's is the only place where there is more than one net per team and at a time when we are talking about being professional, that is ridiculous," Bennett said.

Perfect pair

Sir Donald Bradman and his devoted wife, Jessie, who has died at the age of 87, had known each other since their school days in the New South Wales Tablelands 80 years ago. By The Don's own repeated account, Lady Jessie was his best friend as well and perhaps the only person capable of persuading him to change his mind.

Some years ago, there was a campaign to dissuade him from sporting a newly-grown moustache. A letter from an admirer informed him the moustache was as bad as "painting a beard on the Mona Lisa". His resolve to keep it intensifying further, The Don showed the letter to his wife who said, simply: "He's right. Shave it off." And Bradman did.

Quick tour

The townships of South Africa are in need of visits and coaching from the great and the good if, as is hoped, a new generation of fast bowlers is to emerge. Next year, when West Indies undertake their inaugural, historic tour, three of their finest exponents of the art will be there.

Wes Hall, Charlie Griffith and Michael Holding, who once turned down a vast sum to play in South Africa, will be joining Sir Garfield Sobers in meeting dignitaries and taking part in a forum. "Conrad Hunte, my old colleague, who helps with the development of the game in the townships, feels there is a great deal of latent talent there," Sir Garfield said.

War of words

The controversy over David Frith's autobiography, *Caught England, Bowled Australia* shows no signs of abating. *Wisden Cricket Monthly*, which, like *The Cricketer*, is not carrying a review, details its reasons for not doing so, and Frith's subsequent departure from the editorial board, in its imminent issue.

Frith, a former editor of both magazines, is now having an altercation with Eric Budd, who refuses to stock the autobiography in the bookshop he runs at the Oval and has had it taken off a separate sales point on the ground. "I think I can be forgiven for having grave suspicions that there is a closing of ranks against me," Frith said.

No-ball

Ben Brocklehurst, a former captain of Somerset who took on the task of developing the game on Corfu, quickly learnt that a sense of humour was required when the island's fishermen commandeered some nets sent out from England.

Brocklehurst also recollects asking his Corfiot agent to send a telex to England for more cricket balls. He learnt later that this had read: "Cricketers have arrived without their balls." Back came the answer from London: "Sorry to hear your news. No holiday is complete without them."

FATHER TIMES

EXTRA COVER

WORD-WATCHING

Answers from page 46

SEMICHA

(b) The laying-on of hands by which a Rabbi is ordained. The ordination of a Rabbi. A diploma of ordination. "Out of regular disciples (Talmidim) were chosen the Chaberim (colleagues) who again were elected to the dignity of a Rabbi by the Semicha, or imposition of hands by three members of the Sanhedrin."

CHAROSET

(a) A mixture of apples, nuts, spices etc., eaten ceremonially at the Passover Seder service. It symbolises the clay mixed by the Israelites during their slavery in Egypt.

AUTOPLATE

(c) A curved stereotype for newspaper printing, made by an autoplate machine. A machine for automatically casting, shaving and bevelling stereotypes.

MARIA AGNESI

(b) The first woman in the Western world (so far as is known) who could accurately be called a mathematician. Born in Milan in 1718, she became knowledgeable in a wide range of science. After 1738 she concentrated on maths. In 1748 she produced a 1,000-page study of algebra and analysis, acclaimed by the French Academy of Science as the best of its kind. She was appointed to the Chair of Mathematics and Science at Bologna by the Pope in 1750.

SOLUTION TO WINNING CHESS MOVE

1 ... Rxg4+! 2 fxg4 Be3+ winning the white queen.

TELEVISION CHOICE

The high price of freedom

Films of Fire: How Far Home?
Channel 4, 9.00pm

Gerry Conlon was one of the Guildford Four, spending 15 years in prison before his conviction was quashed in 1989. But as Brendan Byrne's measured but powerful film shows, freedom did not produce happiness. Conlon felt disorientated and was overwhelmed by the public attention. He helped to write the film about the Guildford Four, *In the Name of the Father*, but could not handle the publicity and turned to hard drugs as a way of escape. Now 43, he is still confused, finding it difficult to put down roots or form lasting relationships. Not surprisingly he has allied himself with other victims of miscarried justice, such as the Birmingham Six. He is angry that he was not given help when he left prison and he is still waiting for an official apology.



Robinson, Conlon and Power (C4, 9pm)

Horizon: Mind Over Body
BBC2, 9.25pm

That the mind may be able to affect the way we fight disease is an intriguing thought, though the merit of Jill Fullerton-Smith's film is that it assesses the evidence coolly and does not make extravagant claims. Medical orthodoxy maintained that the body worked independently of the mind and assertions to the contrary were denounced as unscientific. The film describes a number of studies over the past 20 years which have provided evidence of a mind/body link and looks at how this might be applied to the treatment of diseases, even malignant ones. Christine Mechie, who has breast cancer, is taking part in a trial at Aberdeen Royal Infirmary in which patients are taught to fight their cancer by relaxation techniques and by visualising its destruction. Nobody pretends that this amounts to a cure but nor can it be dismissed as mumbo-jumbo.

999 International
BBC1, 9.30pm

As another series of reconstructed near-tragedies comes to an end, let us reflect on a dubious but clever formula. In one sense the programmes are creating entertainment out of the misfortunes of others. Private horror is made public, to be enjoyed from the comfort of our armchairs. But, and this is central to the project, there is always a happy ending. We know this because the victims are there on screen, smiling and relieved, to take us through their ordeals. The British version of 999 could claim the justification of passing on first-aid tips. No such excuse can be offered when the incidents are not only far away but far from the experience of ordinary viewers. Tonight's victims are a Swiss mountaineer stuck a down a crevasse, a horribly injured canoeist and a helicopter's winchman stranded in the Atlantic Ocean.

QED — Challenging Children
BBC1, 10.30pm

Tonight's film is called *Crisis in the Classroom* and charts the efforts to save four children with variously difficult behaviour from being excluded from school. All four have the benefit of the Marlborough Family Service, an education unit in London. Its co-founder, Brenda McHugh, talks of turning a linear problem into a systems issue. Translated into English, this means not just involving the child but also its parents and recognising that different families need different solutions. Patient work by the Marlborough's team of therapists attempts to rid James of his temper tantrums and Danny of his agoraphobia, to wean Shane off his disruptive behaviour and to coax Jobedah, who has taken refuge in silence and has become unteachable, back into speech. The results are quietly impressive. **Peter Waymark**

RADIO CHOICE

Not Just A Pretty Face
Radio 4, 7.30pm

This programme, the first in a three-part series on the Miss America pageant, is all the more powerful for starting with the homespun innocence of the 1958 winner being crowned and intoning the standard "God bless America" sentiments of such occasions. But Marilyn Van Derbur was, indeed, not just a pretty face. Although she was probably the most popular winner in the history of the pageant, and went on to become a successful television presenter, the fame hid a dark childhood in which she was the victim of incest. The perpetrator was her father, a wealthy man, who, says Van Derbur, "pried me open. It was repetitive, consistent, unending until I turned 18 and left home." Her ordeal remained hidden for 40 years.

In Repertory
Radio 3, 1.00pm

A new series of the programme in which leading opera performers talk about specific roles, often with some interesting sidelights on the wider career of the performer. The presenter, as before, is Rodney Milnes, the opera critic of *The Times* and editor of the magazine *Opera*. Today he talks to the German soprano Anja Silja about the role of Senta in Wagner's *The Flying Dutchman*. Silja has been associated with Wagner roles for much of her long career and she appeared in a number of Bayreuth Festival productions staged by Wagner's grandson, Wieland. Today the recording used to illustrate the interview is the 1968 record that Silja made with Otto Klemperer conducting and Theo Adam in the title role. **Peter Barnard**

RADIO 1

7.00am Mark Radcliffe **9.00** Simon Mayo **12.00** Mary Anne Hobbs includes **12.30pm** Newsbeat **2.00** Nicky Campbell With the Afternoon Loveleast and the Teasingly Topical Triple Tracker **4.00** Kevin Greening **6.15** Newsbeat **6.30** Evening Session with Steve Lamacq **8.30** Movie Update with Andrew Male **8.40** John Peel Includes a session from Inter **10.30** Charlie Jordan **1.00am** Clive Warren **4.00** Chris Moyles

RADIO 2

6.00am Sarah Kennedy **7.30** Wake Up to Wogan **9.30** Ken Bruce **11.30** Jimmy Young **1.30pm** Debbie Thrower **3.00** Ed Stewart **5.05** Johnnie Walker **7.00** David Allan **8.00** Paul Jones **9.00** The Deniece Williams Show **9.30** The News Huddlines Roy Hudd, June Whitfield and Chris Emmett present the topical sketch show **10.00** Today's the Day. Martyn Lewis presents the nostalgia quiz with guests Bob Holness, Nerys Hughes, Gareth Hunt and Diane Keen **10.30** Richard Allinson **12.05am** Steve Madden **3.00** Alex Lester

RADIO 5 LIVE

6.00am The Breakfast Programme **9.00** The Magazine With Brian Hayes **12.00** Midday with Mair **2.00pm** Ruscoe on Five **4.00** Nationwide with John Inverdale **7.00** News Extra **7.30** The Ryder Cup Years Tony Adamson takes a look at the history of the competition With guests Tony Jacklin, Peter Alliss and Billy Casper **8.00** David Gower's Cricket Weekly Chat from around the counties with David Gower and guest **9.00** Inside Edge With Rob Bonnet **10.00** Referendum Special With Eddie Mair in Cardiff and Nick Robinson in London Plus, News Extra and The Financial World Tonight **3.00am** Up All Night with Rhod Sharp **5.00** Morning Reports

TALK RADIO

6.30am Paul Ross and Carol McGiffen **9.00** Scott Chisholm **12.00** Lorraine Kelly **2.00pm** Tommy Boyd **4.00** Peter Deeley **7.00** Anna Raeburn **9.00** James Whale **1.00am** Ian Collins

WORLD SERVICE

6.00am Newsday **6.30** Europe Today **7.00** News **7.15** The World Today **7.30** Meridian Books **8.00** News **8.15** Off the Shelf Red Dwarf **8.30** Composer of the Month **9.00** News **9.10** Pause for Thought **9.15** Evil-Pursued by a Bear **9.25** Psychologically Speaking **9.30** Pop the Question **10.00** News **10.05** Business **10.15** Home is Where the Hatred is **10.30** Business File **10.45** Sport **11.00** Newsdesk **11.30** Discovery **12.00** Newsdesk **12.30pm** The Learning World **12.45** F O O C. **1.00** News **1.05** Business **1.15** Britain Today **1.30** Record News **1.45** Sport **2.00** Newshour **3.00**. News **3.05** Outlook **3.30** Multitrack X-Press **4.00** News **4.05** Sport **4.15** Exit-Pursued by a Bear **4.25** Psychologically Speaking **4.30** John Peel **5.00** Europe Today **5.30** Business **5.45** Britain Today **6.00** News **6.15** The World Today **6.30** Record News **6.45** Sport **7.00** Newsdesk **7.30** Plants of Power **8.00** News Summary **8.01** Outlook **8.25** Pause for Thought **8.30** John Peel **9.00** Newshour **10.00** News **10.05** Business **10.15** Britain Today **10.30** Meridian Books **11.00** Newsdesk **11.30** The World Today **11.45** Sport **12.00** News **12.05am** Outlook **12.30** The Vintage Chart Show **1.00** Newsdesk **1.30** Exit-Pursued by a Bear **1.40** Psychologically Speaking **1.45** Britain Today **2.00** Newsdesk **2.30** The Works **3.00** Newsday **3.30** Focus on Faith **4.00** News **4.05** Business **4.15** Sport **4.30** Europe Today (648 only) **5.00** Newsdesk **5.30** Europe Today

CLASSIC FM

6.00am Alan Mann **9.00** Henry Kelly **1.00pm** Listener Request Hour with Jane Jones **2.00** Concerto Danzi (Flute Concerto No 2 in D minor) **3.00** Jamie Crick **7.00** Newsnight with John Brunning **7.30** Sonata Mendelssohn (Cello Sonata No 1 in B flat major) **8.00** Evening Concert Berlioz (Roman Carnival Overture) Liszt (Piano Concerto No 2) **10.00** Michael Mappin **2.00am** Concerto (r) **3.00** Mark Griffiths

VIRGIN RADIO

7.00am Russ and Jono **10.00** Graham Dene **1.00pm** Jeremy Clark **4.00** Nicky Horne **7.00** Nick Abbot **10.00** Mark Forrest **2.00am** Richard Porter

RADIO 3

6.00am On Air, with Andrew McGregor. Includes Verdi (Overture: The Sicilian Vespers); Dvořák (Scherzo Capriccioso), Parry (I Was Glad), Kodaly (Suite Hary Janos); Paganini (Caprice No 24 in A minor); Strauss (Don Juan)
9.00 Morning Collection, with Catriona Young Includes Purcell (Suite, The Prophetess); Schubert (Du Bist du Ruh), Strauss (Sonatine No 2 in E flat)
10.00 Musical Encounters, with Stephanie Hughes Includes Curzon (Overture Punchinello), Stravinsky (Suite Italienne) Bridge (Two Poems of Richard Jeffries), Vivaldi (Concerto in D), Havelock Nelson (Piano Concertino), Koechlin (Seven Stars' Symphony, Fifth and Sixth Mvts), Beethoven (An Die Ferne Geliebte)
12.00 Composer of the Week: Clementi
1.00pm In Repertory. See Choice (1/6)
2.00 The BBC Orchestras. BBC National Orchestra of Wales Beethoven (Overture Coriolan), under Mark Wigglesworth; Mathias (Dance Overture); Tchaikovsky (Swan Lake, excerpts), under Tadaaki Otaka, Beethoven (Symphony No 7 in A), under Mark Wigglesworth
4.00 Ensemble. Penny Gore introduces one of Schubert's most magical quartets, played by the Takacs Quartet Schubert (String Quartet in A minor) (r)
4.45 Music Machine. Tommy Pearson looks at the ways in which musical instruments are used across different cultures of the world
5.00 In Tune, with Sean Rafferty. Includes Gershwin (Summertime), Sibelius (Finlandia), Rodrigo (Concierto de Aranjuez)
7.30 Performance on 3. Live from the Barbican Hall, London William Christie directs Sophie Daneman, soprano, Katalin Karolyi, mezzo Steve Dugardin, countertenor, Francois Piolino, tenor, Matthieu Lecroart, baritone Charpentier (Les Plaisirs de Versailles) **8.00** What Heart of Stone Would Not Be Moved? With Graham Sadler **8.20** William Christie directs Sophie Daneman, Mhairi Lawson and Gaelle Mechaly, sopranos Katalin Karolyi, mezzo Steve Dugardin, countertenor, Paul Agnew and Francois Piolino, tenors, Matthieu Lecroart, baritone, Nathan Berg, bass Charpentier (La Descente d'Orphee aux Enfers)
9.35 Postscript: Monument & Commemoration (4/5) (r)
10.00 Music Restored. George Pratt introduces a concert given in July as part of the York Early Music Festival. Choir of King's College, Cambridge, Robert Quinney, organ, under Stephen Cleobury John Browne (Stabat Mater), Richard Farrant (Felix Namque), Walter Lambe (Stella Caeli) William Shelbye (Felix Namque), Tallis (Videte Miraculum) (1/8)
10.45 Night Waves. Patrick Wright reports from the world premiere of Gavin Bryars's composition *A Man in a Room, Gambling*. He also discusses contemporary views of Sophocles's Electra in the light of a new version by Frank McGuinness
11.30 Proms Composer of the Week: Verdi (r)
12.30am Jazz Notes, with Digby Fairweather
1.00 Through the Night, with Donald Macleod

RADIO 4

5.55am Shipping Forecast (LW) 6.00 News Briefing **6.10** Farming Today **6.25** Prayer for the Day **6.30** Today **8.45** Speak After the Bleep (4/5) **8.58** Weather
9.00 News 9.05 Face the Facts John Waite and his team of investigators follow up listeners complaints (r)
9.30 Look Homeward Angel. Kim Normanton presents the first of three programmes which look at life from a child's perspective. Paola, aged six, and her family fled Chile for the safety of Scotland But local youths and playground bullies soon shattered her dreams of a peaceful new life (1/3)
10.00 News; One Flat Summer (FM). A gambling drama by Dave Sheasby With Gerard McDermott and Gillian Bevan (5/6)
10.00 Daily Service (LW)
10.15 On This Day (LW)
10.30 Woman's Hour, with Jenni Murray
11.30 From Our Own Correspondent. News from BBC reporters around the world
12.00 News; You and Yours, with Mark Whittaker
12.25pm Looking Forward to the Past Trevor Phillips is joined by Stephanie Cole, Professor Lisa Jardine, Charles Kennedy, MP, and Lord Robert Winston **12.55** Weather
1.00 The World at One, with Nick Clarke
1.40 The Archers (r) **1.55** Shipping Forecast (LW)
2.00 News; Thursday Afternoon Play: Cries Across the Tracks, by Laurence Allen Can a man's marriage be rescued by eavesdropping on the sweet nothings called between a prisoner in his cell and his girlfriend on the street?
3.00 News; The Afternoon Shift, with Daire Brenan
4.00 News 4.05 Kaleidoscope. Roisin McAuley reviews the new production of *Othello* at the National Theatre
4.45 Short Story: Tête à Tête, by Jean Wrist. Read by Gwen Taylor
5.00 PM 5.50 Shipping Forecast (LW) **5.55** Weather
6.00 Six O'Clock News
6.30 Control Group Six (4/4)
7.00 News 7.05 The Archers
7.20 Not Just a Pretty Face. See Choice (1/3)
8.00 Whitehall and the Boffins. Christopher Harvie investigates the changing relationship between scientists and politicians in postwar Britain (1/2) (r)
8.45 Singular Women, by Stewart Parmiut. Comic monologues featuring four different women's bitter-sweet views of the world Celia Imrie stars as a shy schoolteacher who has reluctantly achieved notoriety (2/4)
9.00 Does He Take Sugar? With Frederick Dove
9.30 Kaleidoscope (r) **9.59** Weather
10.00 The World Tonight, with Robin Lustig
10.45 Book at Bedtime: Stories by Mark Twain Read by Kelsey Grammer (4/5)
11.00 Wales Decides. Live coverage of the results of the referendum as they come in Plus political reaction and analysis from BBC correspondents Continued after the news
12.00 News and Weather
12.20am Wales Decides. Continued coverage
3.00 As World Service

FREQUENCY GUIDE. RADIO 1. FM 97.6-99.8. **RADIO 2.** FM 88.0-90.2. **RADIO 3.** FM 90.2-92.4. **RADIO 4.** FM 92.4-94.6; LW 198; MW 720. **RADIO 5 LIVE.** MW 693, 909. **WORLD SERVICE.** MW 648; LW 198 (12.45-5.55am). **CLASSIC FM.** FM 100-102. **VIRGIN RADIO.** FM 105.8; MW 1197, 1215. **TALK RADIO.** MW 1053, 1089.
Television and radio listings compiled by Peter Dear, Ian Hughes, Rosemary Smith, Susan Thomson, Jane Gregory and John McNamara.

Alternative antiques and doggy derring-do

REVIEW



Joe Joseph

Francine Stock has returned with what we thought was **The Antiques Show** (BBC1) but which *The Radio Times* describes as "*Top Gear* on antiques". I must have been watching a different programme last night, because somewhere out there exists a copy with the *real* commentary that Stock recorded as she wandered around The Grosvenor House Antiques Fair chatting to Shakira Caine and Sally Burton (but not Jeremy Clarkson). You know the one I mean, the Stock commentary which tells us: "Look at this Louis XVI *fauteuil* and before you write out a cheque for £8,000 ask yourself: will it impress your girlfriend the next time you bring *her* back for coffee? Now, this Georgian writing table, that's what you call a nice antique. Owning this slab of prime pre-Greenpeace mahogany would be even more fun than tossing TV sets off the top of a skyscraper."

Then David Dickinson, the dealer who addresses us as if we're a remedial class, turned up with his weekly *Buyers' Guide* — this week's being on period baths.

"*If this* bath — which has a few little chips on the enamel, the size of a sixpence, and rather cumbersome plumbing back here which would need to be overhauled if you didn't want blockages in your waste trap — now, if this bath were a person," Dickinson was probably saying on the missing commentary, "it would be your Great Auntie Hilda before she'd had her facial moles seen to and her new colostomy bag installed."

Madeleine Marsh then took us to the National Classic Caravans Rally, where people who spend their weekends restoring 1920s, 1930s and 1940s caravans instead of leading normal lives, gather to admire each other's so-called "working antiques" — although until an antique has its own tax lawyer it's probably not working hard enough, if you ask me.

So what was Madeleine saying on the phantom *Antiques Show* voiceover that had gone missing? Probably: "These caravans came with everything except an indoor loo. Accessories ranged all the way from crockery and cutlery designed specifically for each trailer, all the way to paper bags with holes cut out for the eyes so that *embarrassed owners could drive* them without being recognised by anyone they might know."

Just as *I Love Lucy*, *MASH* and, most recently, *Cheers* spawned so many episodes over the years that a cheapskate media mogul could probably run a 24-hour cable television channel showing nothing but *I Love Lucy* reruns or *MASH* or *Cheers* repeats, there will soon be enough animal and vet-related programmes (from *Animal Hospital* and *Pet Rescue* to *Noah's Ark and Vets in Practice*) to provide round-the-clock programming for a new Animal Channel.

At least BBC Bristol produces a better class of animal programme than most, as we are seeing in **Animal People** (BBC1). Last week it was about a couple who took in a lion cub, with mixed results. This week it was back to that perennial favourite: dogs. It was one of those "aren't-dogs-just-great?" programmes that could bear repeated showings on a new cable Animal Channel — except maybe in Korea, where it might be better suited to the Food Channel. The programme had its moments even for those of us who have little interest in how much that doggy in the window is, unless someone happens to be offering a substantial prize for guessing correctly.

The programme's message was essentially that dogs are the unsung heroes of war. We saw little pooches running across minefields ferrying messages; we saw them being parachuted on raids behind enemy lines; and we saw them being trained to sniff out explosives in Northern Ireland. Never underestimate a dog's nose. "Dogs see the world in odour pictures," said the narrator, Ian McShane, "with a sense of smell a thousand times greater than our own." When you think how much time they spend smelling each other's bottoms, it's a wonder they can still walk straight, let alone run errands behind enemy lines like a canine Milk Tray Man.

There were many moving testimonies from owners who insisted that their doggy had saved their lives. Paratrooper Bill Rutter recalled how, in the Ardennes in 1944, he was walking in the woods during a lull in the fighting when his search dog Rex darted off into the undergrowth and leapt on a German sniper who was about to shoot. "If he hadn't caught them," Bill told us, "I wouldn't be here, I should have been lying with a lot of my mates out there."

Then there was John Flannelly, who was on patrol in Vietnam with his search dog Bruiser, when their patrol was ambushed. John was badly wounded, unable to move. But Bruiser wouldn't leave. He dragged John by the shoulder to an old bomb crater which afforded shelter. "I love him. I miss him. I'll never forget him," wept Flannelly.

"Under the stresses of war," said McShane, "man's best friend has revealed intelligence and senses so powerful, we can't fully explain them. They have instincts we don't understand. It's a mystery."

But not as big a mystery as the recommissioning of **Chalk**, the classroom sitcom which returned to BBC1 last night with suspiciously little fanfare. The plot pivoted on whether or not a new student teacher was — gulp! — gay. Listen to the student teacher offering Galfast High's deputy headmaster, played by David Bamber, a biscuit from an unseen tin: "Would you like a chocolate finger?"

Oh, crikey! Even Reg Varney would wince to be associated with a line like that. But that's how we know that *Chalk*, too, is a mystery: because the show's such a dog.

BBC1

6.00am Business Breakfast (26789)
7.00 BBC Breakfast News (T) (98947031)
9.05 Can't Cook, Won't Cook (T) (2892128)
9.30 Style Challenge Two former heart transplant patients receive a makeover (1630128)
9.55 Kilroy (T) (5689789)
10.35 Change That From Cardiff (1762215)
11.00 News (T) and weather (4034383)
11.05 The Really Useful Show Consumer issues (T) (9074302)
11.35 Room for Improvement Artificially ageing furniture; the efficiency of self-assembly instructions (2645302)
12.00 News (T) and weather (6504505)
12.05pm Call My Bluff (9882296)
12.35 Going for a Song (9795857)
1.00 News (T) and weather (24234)
1.30 Regional News (17682383)
1.40 The Weather Show (87547296)
1.45 Neighbours (T) (77325876)
2.10 Quincy A teenager dies after taking a designer drug (r) (4691645)
3.00 Through the Keyhole (9499)
3.30 Funnybones (7514296) **3.35** Playdays (8350302) **3.55** Dinobabies (8361418) **4.20** Mr Wymi (T) (2847383) **4.35** Cartoon Critters (6859760) **5.00** Newsround (T) (9261296) **5.10** Byker Grove. Last in series (r) (T) (5150692)
5.35 Neighbours (r) (T) (829383)
6.00 News (T) and weather (695)
6.30 Regional News (T) (147)
7.00 Watchdog With Anne Robinson. Including Richard Branson answering criticisms about poor standards of service on Virgin Rail; and a "free" water-saving device that Yorkshire Water makes its customers pay for (T) (4708)
7.30 EastEnders Pauline gets a blast from the past, while Polly tries to force Tony into making a decision about their relationship. The tension mounts for Mark and Ruth (T) (401)
8.00 Birds of a Feather: The Chigwell Connection Doubt is cast over the guilt of Chris and Darryl; Dorien is embarrassed. With Pauline Quirke, Linda Robson and Lesley Joseph (r) (T) (756741)
8.50 Animal Hospital Heroes With Rolf Harris (r) (T) (516709)
9.00 News (T) and weather (1215)
9.30 999 International Includes reconstructions of the plight of a helicopter winchman stranded in the Atlantic and a mountaineer stuck in a crevase (T) (701673)
10.20 QED: Challenging Children Insight into the work of Westminster's pioneering education unit for disruptive pupils. Devised by psychotherapists, the classes are also compulsory for parents (T) (774789)
11.15 Referendum 97 Wales Decides Huw Edwards presents live coverage from Cardiff as the results of the referendum on a Welsh assembly are declared. Peter Snow analyses the outcome of the day's activity at the polls with the help of his famous Swingometer (69876470)
3.00am Weather (86550906)

VideoPlus+ and the Video PlusCodes
The numbers next to each TV programme listing are Video PlusCode™ numbers, which allow you to programme your video recorder instantly with a VideoPlus+™ handset. Tap in the Video PlusCode for the programme you wish to record. Videoplus+ (™), Pluscode (™) and Video Programmer are trademarks of Gemstar Development Ltd.

BBC2

6.00am Open University: Renewable Energies (5732760) **6.50** Patterns in Green (5489166)
7.15 See Hear Breakfast News (T and signing) (4529586)
7.30 Smurfs' Adventures (r) (6610963) **7.55** Blue Peter (r) (T) (6695654) **8.25** Johnson and Friends (7055948) **8.30** Mouse and Mole (r) (7417586) **8.35** Teletubbies (r) (1297031) **9.00** Harry and the Hendersons (r) (T) (2891499) **9.25** Flash Gordon's Trip to Mars (b/w) (r) (3080321) **9.45** Rocky Star (b/w) (r) (8892418) **9.50** Cartoon **10.00** Teletubbies (83499)
10.30 Lone Rider Fights Back (1941, b/w) FILM Musical western with George Huston. Directed by Al St John (90321)
11.30 The Fugitive (b/w) (r) (T) (9511760) **12.20pm** Complete Guide to the 20th Century (r) (6506963) **12.30** Working Lunch (75383) **1.00** Barney (73605079) **1.05** Monty (73697050) **1.10** The Craft Hour (3587532) **2.10** Consuming Passions (11493437)
2.20 Racing from Newbury Featuring the **2.40; 3.10; 3.40** and **4.10** races (56339079)
4.30 Going, Going, Gone (6858031) **4.55** Esther: when a sibling dies (2346942) **5.30** Today's the Day (296)
6.00 Deep Space Nine (T) (604708)
6.45 Sliders (T) (896012)
7.30 Leviathan John Cole on the 1921 negotiations between the British Government and Sinn Fein, which resulted in Ireland's partition (T) (673)
8.00 The Air Show The history of the United States Air Force; and the World Air Games in Turkey (1470) **WALES:** Anchors Away
8.30 Top Gear The new Peugeot 406 Coupé and the Mercedes CLK; the Frankfurt Show (T) (5555)
9.00 Third Rock from the Sun Sci-fi comedy (419334)



Christine Mechie uses her mind (9.25)

9.25 Horizon: Mind Over Body A look at research into alternative medicine focusing on the use of positive thinking to help to cure illnesses (T) (683031)
10.15 10x10 The tale of two obsessive climbers (478895)
10.28 Video Nation Shorts (977741)
10.30 Newsnight (T) (174925)
11.15 Late Review (425321)
11.55 Walking on Thin Ice (962692)
12.00 Weather (2952857)
12.05am Duckman (3542277)
12.30 Learning Zone: O U: Virtual Democracy? (47548) **1.00** Understanding Violence (37722) **1.30** Somewhere a Wall Came Down (50161) **2.00** Perfect Pictures Essentials (20180) **4.00** Teaching Languages (36635) **5.00** Get by in Italian (35068)

HTV

6.00am GMTV (7435147)
9.25 Supermarket Sweep (T) (2881012)
9.55 Regional News (T) (1348673)
10.00 The Time, the Place (70925)
10.30 This Morning (T) (18156876)
12.20pm HTV News (6500789)
12.30 News (T) and weather (9781654)
12.55 Shortland Street (9799673) **1.25** Home and Away (T) (58423234) **1.50** Remote Control Cooking (T) (77331437) **2.20** Vanessa (T) (75658418) **2.50** The Natural Health Show (6000147)
3.20 News (T) (4037079)
3.30 Potamus Park (r) (1786296) **3.40** Wizadora (7529128) **3.50** Adventures of Dawdle (7518012) **4.00** Snug and Cozi (2852215) **4.15** Hey Arnold! (T) (4859760) **4.40** Animal Ark (T) (7456147)
5.10 A Country Practice (2605128)
5.40 News (T) and weather (976019)
6.00 Home and Away (r) (T) (846586)
6.25 HTV Weather (755895)
6.30 HTV News (T) (215)
7.00 Emmerdale (T) (9876)
7.30 WALES: Homeground Wales's little known historical events (499)
7.30 The Big Story Dermot Murnaghan reports on the American scheme that deters criminals by public shaming (499)
8.00 The Bill A girl accuses a stage hypnotist of attempted rape (T) (5296)



Clive James (8.30pm)

8.30 Clive James on TV Clive selects more memorable moments from British television (7031)
9.00 Taggart: Babushka Jardine, Reid and Fraser uncover more duplicity as they close in on the blackmailers, but can they prevent further tragedy? (3/3) (T) (3925)
10.00 News (T) and weather (43296)
10.30 Regional News (T) (565383)
10.40 WALES: The Ferret New magazine focusing on consumer issues (451586)
10.40 West Eye View Investigating low pay at the West's premier holiday spot (451586)
11.15 WALES: Celtic Fists A six-part documentary series looking at the lineage of Celtic boxing champions (T) (511692)
11.50-2.30 WALES: Referendum '97: Wales Decides The results live from Cardiff (83911215)
11.15 In Suspicious Circumstances (r) (934418)
12.15am Short Story Cinema (2296616) **12.35** The LADS (T) (3944432) **1.05** Planet Rock Profile (3755513) **1.40** Ed's Night Party (4425451) **2.05** Late and Loud (r) (5284109) **2.30** WALES: Late & Loud **3.00** Waterlines (r) (T) (69329884) **3.25** Good Sex Guide Late (r) (9184109) **4.20** Recollections (67166187) **4.35** Time, the Place (r) (31499600) **5.00** Garden Calendar (r) (T) (98345) **5.30** News

CENTRAL

As HTV West except:
12.55pm-1.25 A Country Practice (9799673)
5.10-5.40 Shortland Street (2605128)
6.25 Central News (854505)
6.55-7.00 Lifeline (700505)
10.40 Film: The Freshman (92185383)
12.40am Planet Mirth (3943703)
1.10 Rockmania (5897600)
2.05 Planet Rock Profiles (3733180)
2.35 God's Gift (8181364)
4.30 Central Jobfinder '97 (4577567)
5.20 Asian Eye (1175242)

WESTCOUNTRY

As HTV West except:
12.55 Home and Away (4421586)
1.20-1.50 No Place Like Home (31286465)
5.10-5.40 Home and Away (2605128)
6.00-7.00 Westcountry Live (87128)
10.30 Westcountry News (589963)
10.45 All the World's a Stage (502673)
11.15 Roadrunner (509586)
11.45 Prisoner: Cell Block H (324352)

MERIDIAN

As HTV West except:
5.10-5.40 Home and Away (2605128)
6.00 Meridian Tonight (963)
6.30-7.00 Big Day Out (215)
10.30 Meridian News and Weather (589963)
10.45 Film: Betsy's Wedding (29823166)

ANGLIA

As HTV West except:
12.55-1.25 A Country Practice (9799673)
5.10-5.40 Shortland Street (2605128)
6.25 Anglia News (854505)
10.40 Cover Story (405186)
11.10 Streetwise (920296)
11.40 Cover Story: Special Update (993302)
12.10am Alfred Hitchcock (2115797)

S4C

Starts:
7.00 The Big Breakfast (14857)
9.00 Something So Right (53673)
9.30 Film: Mother is a Freshman (4210499)
10.55 Mr Frog Went A-Courting (9077499)
11.00 The Great Outdoors (4789)
11.30 Here's One I Made Earlier (5418)
12.00 Sesame Street (73437)
12.30pm Baby Baby (32609)
1.00 Slot Melthrin (83962857)
1.15 Wil Cwac Cwac (83950012)
1.30 Mark Tully's Faces of India (77313031)
1.55 Film: Ten Gentlemen from West Point (73153470)
3.45 Exposed (1796673)
4.00 Bewitched (128)
4.30 The Feel Good Factor (352)
5.00 5 Pump (7654)
5.30 Countdown (692)
6.00 Newyddion (293470)
6.15 Heno (869708)
7.00 Pobol y Cwm (967963)
7.25 Y Glas (216012)
8.00 Y Jocars (6166)
8.30 Newyddion (5673)
9.00 Meca (214050)
9.35 Film: Ymadawiad Arthur (227586)
11.25-3.00am Refferendwm '97 (69883760)

CHANNEL 4

5.55am Sesame Street (19499) **7.00** The Big Breakfast (14857) **9.00** Something So Right (53673)
9.30 Mother is a Freshman (1949) Loretta FILM Young, Van Johnson and Betty Lynn. A widowed mother and her daughter, attending the same college, fall for the same lecturer. Directed by Lloyd Bacon (4210499)
10.55 Mr Frog Went A-Courting Animation (9077499)
11.00 The Great Outdoors (r) (4789)
11.30 Here's One I Made Earlier Peppers and cheese salad; fish and chips with red sauce; tarte tatin with apricots (T) (5418)
12.00 Sesame Street (73437) **12.30pm** Baby Baby (32609) **1.00** Light Lunch (r) (98234)
2.00 My Wife's Relations (b/w) Buster Keaton comedy short (75645944)
2.25 The Bells Go Down (1943, b/w) A tribute FILM to the Auxiliary Fire Service in London's East End during the Blitz. With Tommy Trinder, James Mason and Mervyn Johns. Directed by Basil Dearden (180234)
4.00 Bewitched (r) (T) (128) **4.30** Countdown (T) (6850499) **4.55** Ricki Lake: It's Fun to be a Freak (T) (4041370) **5.30** Absolutely Animals (3/8) (r) (T) (692)
6.00 Boy Meets World Rites of passage comedy (T) (844126)
6.25 Fresh Pop (753437)
6.30 Hollyoaks Teen soap (T) (857)
7.00 Channel 4 News (T) (615234)
7.50 Get Sorted A garden path (633654)
8.00 Sultan's Sanctuary The wildlife of the Sultanate of Oman (T) (6166)
8.30 Feast (4/8) Food labelling; wild mushroom risotto; Cornish seafood (T) (5673)
9.00 Films of Fire: How Far Home? Gerry Conlon, one of the Guildford Four, tells of his experiences since prison (T) (675012)
9.45 Pond Life Candy Guard's cartoon series (r) (T) (485925)



Clive Anderson hosts (10.00pm)

10.00 Whose Line is it Anyway? Improvised comedy (T) (74166)
10.30 Scam (1993) starring Christopher FILM Walken, Lorraine Bracco and Martin Donovan. A made-for-television thriller about a former FBI agent and a con artist who join forces to fool a Mafia accountant. John Flynn directs (92104418)
12.25am Midnight Special: Wales Decides From Cardiff Castle, a discussion on the implications of today's referendum on Welsh devolution (90569109)
2.30 Seven Sins Sloth (1/7) (r) (86161)
3.00 Kris Kristofferson: Pilgrim (r) (T) (789513)
4.35 The American Football Big Match (r) (1183529)

CHANNEL 5

CHANNEL 5 ON SATELLITE
Channel 5 is now broadcasting on transponder No 63 on the Astra Satellite. Viewers with a **Videocrypt** decoder will be able to receive the channel free of charge. Frequencies for transponder No 63 are picture: **10.92075 GHz**; sound: **7.02** and **7.20 MHz**

6.00am 5 News Early (7237944)
7.30 USA High Teen sitcom (r) (5491925)
8.00 Havakazoo (9518447)
8.30 WideWorld The impact of computers on businesses (7/15) (3617948)
9.00 Espresso Consumer magazine (7786789) **10.00** Exclusive (r) (6950944) **10.30** Instant Gardens (r) (5695272)
11.00 Leeza Chat show (1397050) **11.50** *Double Espresso* (69626166) **12.00** The Bold and the Beautiful (T) (6368924) **12.30pm** Family Affairs (r) (T) (9806944)
1.00 5 News (85970166) **1.05** Sunset Beach (T) (8589418) **2.00** 5's Company. Live entertainment show (8550079)
3.30 The Mouse That Roared (1959) starring FILM Peter Sellers. A comedy about a tiny Grand Duchy which declares war on America in the hope of obtaining a large sum of cash in postwar aid. However, an advance party arrives in New York and accidentally kidnaps the inventor of the Q-Bomb, forcing the Americans to surrender immediately. Directed by Jack Arnold (4814465)
5.00 Move on Up (T) (8005321)
5.30 100 Per Cent (9022321)
6.00 Exclusive Entertainment news (9029234)
6.30 Family Affairs Duncan goes to Holly for advice. Claire is summoned to lunch with Elsa (T) (9010586)
7.00 5 News (T) (8092857)
7.30 Cup Winners' Cup Football — Live! Coverage of Chelsea v Slovan *Bratislava* from Stamford Bridge as the Blues make their first appearance in top-flight European competition for 26 years. Commentary is provided by Jonathon Pearce (55673925)
9.50 5 News Update (7995302)
10.00 100 Per Cent: Chelsea Special Test your knowledge of the Blues (5918483)



Dylan Moran (10.30pm)

10.30 The Comedy Store Includes the surreal musings of Dylan Moran (r) (9613091)
11.00 The Jack Docherty Show (1499302)
11.45 Melrose Place (r) (T) (7535383)
12.40am Live and Dangerous Includes, at **2.00**, soccer action from a top match in the Brazilian National League (79202819)
4.35 The Streets of San Francisco: Winterkill An old man resorts to crime to support himself in his twilight years. Starring Karl Malden and Michael Douglas (T) (6525890)
5.30 100 Per Cent (r) (7661426)

SATELLITE AND CABLE

● **For more comprehensive listings of satellite and cable channels, see Vision, published on Saturday**

SKY 1

6.00am Morning Glory (928895) **9.00** Regis and Kathie Lee (89760) **10.00** Another World (71196) **11.00** Days of Our Lives (51302) **12.00** Oprah Winfrey (34050) **1.00pm** Geraldo (10470) **2.00** Sally Jessy Raphael (17470) **3.00** Jenny Jones (27298) **4.00** Oprah Winfrey (39031) **5.00** Star Trek: The Next Generation (8925) **6.00** The Live 6 Show (4215) **5.30** Married...with Children (8895) **7.00** The Simpsons (9654) **7.30** M*A*S*H (4079) **8.00** Suddenly Susan (8302) **8.30** The Nanny (7437) **9.00** Seinfeld (35215) **9.30** Mad About You (42079) **10.00** Chicago Hope (72234) **11.00** Star Trek: The Next Generation (72895) **12.00** Late Show with David Letterman (32703) **1.00am** Hit Mix Long Play (2968180)

SKY BOX OFFICE

(PAY-PER-VIEW)
A chance to see the **Music for Montserrat** benefit concert featuring Eric Clapton, Elton John, Paul McCartney and Sting. The two-hour concert will be broadcast at 8pm and 11pm on Transponder 60

SKY NEWS

Worldwide news coverage, with bulletins on the hour, 24 hours a day, seven days a week

SKY MOVIES

8.00am The Chairman (1969) (80881234) **7.45 Little Women** (1994) (568215) **9.45 Promise Her Anything** (1966) (16753741) **11.30 Options** (1969) (71953437) **1.15pm Crooks and Coronets** (1969) (936295) **3.15 Breaking Away** (1979) (44615079) **5.00 The Aviator** (1985) (44494) **7.00 Little Women** (1994) (78079) **9.00 Bird of Prey** (1996) (15762963) **10.45 Mighty Aphrodite** (1995) (28506147) **12.20am Hider in the House** (1989) (615426) **2.10 Jailbreakers** (1994) (5603432) **3.30 Panther** (1995) (607682)

THE MOVIE CHANNEL

6.05am Payment on Demand (1951) (71688321) **8.00 Back to the Future Part II** (1989) (36682) **10.00 Magnificent Obsession** (1935) (24673) **12.00 Holiday** (1937) (29215) **2.00pm The Sky's No Limit** (1984) (67126) **4.00 Time Warrior: Planet of the Dino-Knights** (1995) (1499) **6.00 Tad** (1995) (11920505) **7.40 US Top 10** (749654) **8.00 Back to the Future Part II** (1989) (86437) **10.00 Heat** (1995) (51426437) **12.00am Jefferson in Paris** (1995) (77067155) **3.10 Hourglass** (1995) (401567) **4.45 Freddie as FROT** (1992)

SKY MOVIES GOLD

4.00pm My Cousin Rachel (1952) (9651437) **6.00 The Prince and the Pauper** (1978) (3983741) **8.00 The Taking of Pelham One Two Three** (1974) (3995586) **10.00 The Osterman Weekend** (1983) (9571012) **11.50 I'm Gonna Git You, Sucka** (1989) (3775418) **1.20am David and Bathsheba** (1951) (7974800) **3.15 Murder Most Foul** (1964) (9932248)

TNT

9.00pm Casablanca (1942) (37970857) **11.00 An American in Paris** (1951) (80578963) **1.00am Take Me Out to the Ball Game** (1949) (40461345) **2.45 The Walking Stick** (1970) (84725516)

SKY SPORTS 1

7.00am Sports Centre (47091) **7.30** Wrestling (20012) **8.30** Sports Centre (98383) **9.00** Racing News (12963) **9.30** Aerobics (25925) **10.00** Euro Tour Weekly (61215) **10.30** Golf: British Masters — Live (260383) **1.30pm** Pavilion End (23296) **2.30** Sailing (1760) **3.00** Golf: British Masters — Live (467811) **6.00** Sports Centre (9788) **6.30** Football League Review (3741) **7.00** Trans World Sport (11147) **8.00** Golf (95857) **9.30** Full Throttle (49505) **10.00** Sports Centre (15988) **10.30** Formula Three (84944) **11.30** Full Throttle (67499) **12.00** Sports Centre (48703) **12.30am** Trans World Sport (53190) **1.30** Formula Three (95838) **2.30** Sports Centre (45451) **3.00** Close

SKY SPORTS 2

7.00am Aerobics (6961321) **7.30** Sports Centre (8957128) **8.00** Racing News (5940302) **8.30** Fishing Tales (5949673) **9.00** American Outdoors (5930825) **9.30** Powerboat and Jetski World (7298019) **10.00** Pavilion End (6946012) **11.00** Equestrianism (8401499) **1.00pm** Football (8005505) **3.00** Futbol Mundial (9233321) **3.30** Rugby League World of Super League (4180031) **5.30** Football League Review (5235186) **6.00** Powerboat and Jetski World (8485809) **6.30** Inside the PGA Tour (6285401) **7.00** Sports Centre (9225302) **7.30** Rugby Club (2570166) **9.00** Football League Review (7483505) **9.30** Golf: Texas Open — Live (9775050) **12.00** Tight Lines (1066161) **1.00am** Golf: Bmish Masters (1554074) **2.30** Close

SKY SPORTS 3

12.00 Wrestling (29824692) **1.00pm** The Weekend Fisherman (86335586) **1.30** The Ultimate Fishing Show (29811128) **2.00** The Golden Age of Motor Racing (71376234) **3.00** Great Moments in Sport (74262824) **3.30** Sport USA (46958302) **5.00** Beach Volleyball (65717019) **5.30** Ten-Pin Bowling (84371128) **6.30** Sailing (31226963) **7.00** Tight Lines (37993708) **8.00** Hockey (37973944) **10.00** Bobby Charlton's Soccer Scrapbook (88353885) **11.30** Close

EUROSPORT

7.30am Athletics (55706) **8.30** World Air Games (98147) **9.30** Master Rallye (73789) **10.30** NHRA Drag Racing (65465) **11.00** Offroad Magazine (91944) **12.00** Kick Magazine (33944) **1.00pm** Beach Volleyball (65760) **1.30** Free Climbing (53708) **2.00** Cycling: Tour of Spain — Live (99321) **3.30** World Air Games — Live (46166) **5.00** Football: Under-17 World Youth Championships (15960) **7.00** Live Football Germinal Ekeren v Red Star Belgrade (83925) **9.00** Live Football Real Betis v Budapest Vasutas SC (76586) **10.30** Football Vincenza v Warsaw (15924) **11.00** ATP Tour Review (70302) **11.30** Sailing (85865) **12.00** Cycling: Tour of Spain (60971) **12.30am** Close

UK GOLD

7.00am Rentaghost (4166079) **7.35** Neighbours (9901437) **8.00** Crossroads (9472050) **8.25** EastEnders (3907079) **9.00** The Bill (6032166) **9.30** Howards' Way (4382215) **10.00** In Loving Memory (1779789) **10.30** The Sullivans (6021050) **11.00** Boon (53273760) **12.05pm** Crossroads (72301147) **12.30** Neighbours (4386031) **1.00** EastEnders (1572883) **1.25** No Place Like Home (5846895) **2.15** Live! Birds (8471654) **2.50** Are You Being Served? (2000079) **3.30** The Bill (4099499) **4.00** Casualty (11718673) **5.05** EastEnders (9356966) **5.40** Bob's Full House (9551654) **6.30** Two Pennies (4273505) **7.00** Dr Who (9488050) **7.50** Home to Roost (5688037) **8.20** Citizen Smith (8293037) **9.00** The Bill (2288166) **9.30** Dangerfield (55899031) **10.35** Three of a Kind (2333876) **11.15** Live at Jongleurs (93232296) **11.45** Gold Goes Pop (58970799) **12.30am** Q's a Knockout (79381611) **1.30** Big Deal (13295484) **2.25** Shopping (86794432)



Humphrey Bogart and Ingrid Bergman in *Casablanca* (TNT, 9pm)

GRANADA PLUS

6.00am El Uncul (90649442) **6.30** Beadle's About (6775654) **7.00** Coronation St (8435499) **7.30** Families (8447234) **8.00** Surprise Surprise (5292470) **9.00** Upstairs, Downstairs (3769650) **10.00** Mission Impossible (8443418) **11.00** Sandbaggers (8429654) **12.00** Coronation St (5419857) **12.30pm** Families (10508761) **1.00** Blind Date (10480031) **2.00** Upstairs, Downstairs (6790863) **3.00** Beadle's About (8053708) **3.30** Surgical Spirit (7951708) **4.00** Mission Impossible (2763186) **5.00** Sandbaggers (8037760) **6.00** Families (7940692) **8.30** Coronation St (7931944) **7.00** Blind Date (7713128) **8.00** Mission Impossible (7723876) **9.00** Coronation St (6928050) **9.30** Comedians (1030012) **10.00** In Suspicious Circumstances (7712499)

DISNEY CHANNEL

6.00am Dumbo (81166) **6.30** Lamb Chop (79857) **7.00** Chip 'n' Dale (52465) **7.30** Quack Pack (12050) **8.00** Dinosaurs (56692) **8.30** Bonkers (54963) **9.00** Gummi Bears (45215) **9.30** Groundling Marsh (81505) **10.00** Sesame Street (18234) **11.00** Hunny Pot (5149708) **11.15** Rosie and Jim (4374470) **11.40** Sing Me a Story (4338811) **12.00** Big Garage (7719050) **12.45pm** Winnie the Pooh (25049128) **1.00** Sesame Street (80876) **2.00** Amazing Animals (9692) **2.30** Care Bears (1586) **3.00** Tale Spin (5499) **3.30** Goof Troop (6031) **4.00** Timon and Pumbaa (5166) **4.30** Aladdin (4050) **5.00** Gargoyles (1924) **5.30** Dinosaurs (5302) **6.00** Blossom (2215) **6.30** Boy Meets World (6895) **7.00** Home Improvement (1168) **7.30** Wonder Years (2079) **8.00 FILM: Once in a Blue Moon (1995)** (51437) **9.30** Home Improvement (72857) **10.00** Close

FOX KIDS NETWORK

8.00am Dolly (8572234) **8.30** Billy the Cat (2504166) **9.00** Pinocchio (4151895) **9.30** Power Rangers Zeo (4130302) **10.00** Beetleborgs (8742147) **10.30** Masked Rider (8741418) **11.00** Mega Man (8725470) **11.30** Dudley the Dragon (6040147) **12.00** Inspector Gadget (2595418) **12.30** Samurai Pizza Cats (8721654) **1.00** Sweet Valley High (4149050) **12.00** Ace Ventura (8745234) **12.30pm** Casper (6044963) **1.00** The Tick (4150166) **1.30** Iron Man (6043234) **2.00** Fantastic Four (9215586) **2.30** Power Rangers Zeo (1755079) **3.00** Beetleborgs (9227321) **3.30** Masked Rider (1727296) **4.00** Ace Ventura (1739031) **4.30** Casper (1735215) **5.00** The Tick (9239166) **5.30** X Men (1759895) **6.00** Spiderman (1756708) **6.30** Sweet Valley High (1730760) **7.00** Close

TCC

6.00am Happily Ever After (54012) **6.30** Bobby's World (75031) **7.00** Sporou (13789) **7.30** Dennis the Menace (92296) **8.00** Batman (68166) **8.30** Bots Master (67437) **9.00** Art Attack (58789) **9.30** Earthworm Jim (94079) **10.00** Gravedale High (66383) **10.30** Flash Gordon (47673) **11.00** Creepy Crawlers (39079) **11.30** Gigantor (30708) **12.00** Gravedale High (39325) **12.30pm** Bots Master (98895) **1.00** Batman (53160) **1.30** Eek the Cat (97166) **2.00** Creepy Crawlers (2166) **2.30** Flash Gordon (7760) **3.00** Sonic (1673) **3.30** Earthworm Jim (9505) **4.00** Dennis the Menace (8012) **4.30** Art Attack (4296) **5.00** Close

CARTOON NETWORK

All your favourite cartoons broadcast from **5.00am** to **9.00pm**, seven days a week.

NICKELODEON

6.00am Killer Tomatoes (23128) **6.30** Aaahh! Real Monsters (78505) **7.00** Hey Arnold! (47073) **7.30** Rugrats (88470) **8.00** Doug (97654) **8.30** Country Mouse and City Mouse (96925) **9.00** CBBC (10505) **9.30** CBBC (78963) **10.30** Babar (16789) **11.00** Magic School Bus (91995) **11.30** Bananas in Pyjamas (89296) **12.00** Paddington Bear etc (90741) **12.30pm** Portland Bill etc (27383) **1.00** Dr Seuss (97514) **1.30** Little Bear Stories (26654) **2.00** Jim Henson's Animal Show (1654) **2.30** CBBC (9302) **3.00** CBBC (4019) **3.30** Aaahh! Real Monsters/Doug (1147) **4.00** Hey Arnold! (3334) **4.30** Rugrats (9166) **5.00** Sister Sister (5234) **5.30** Sister Sister (3578) **6.00** Sabrina (84011) **6.30** Kablam! (1383)

TROUBLE

12.00 Swan's Crossing (6007470) **12.30pm** Ready or Not (4388499) **1.00** Madison (6041334) **1.30** Sweet Valley High (4370470) **2.00** Saved by the Bell (6472857) **2.30** Swan's Crossing (4005050) **3.00** Ready or Not (6484692) **3.30** 9-2-5 (4017895) **4.00** Saved by the Bell (4096302) **4.30** USa High (4082586) **5.00** Hangtime (6496437) **5.30** Sweet Valley High (4016166) **6.00** Rush (4013079) **6.30** Teenage Urban Adventures (4097031) **7.00** Hangtime (6478873) **7.30** USa High (4093215) **8.00** Close

BRAVO

8.00pm The Prisoner (1580128) **9.00** The Burning Zone (1593892) **10.00** Tour of Duty (1503079) **11.00 FILM: Android** (1982) (66622234) **1.00am** The Burning Zone (7256513) **2.00** Tour of Duty (9103703) **3.00 FILM: The Stepfather II** (1989) (1682890) **5.00** Alien Nation (1459074)

PARAMOUNT COMEDY

7.00pm Grace Under Fire (5470) **7.30** Roseanne (8645) **8.00** Ellen (1418) **8.30** Cybill (4875) **9.00** Cheers (71031) **9.30** Taxi (47147) **10.00** Fraser (91470) **10.30** Alexei Sayle's Stuff (17418) **11.00** Armstrong and Miller (83875) **11.30** Nightstand (58741) **12.00** Soap (46345) **12.30am** Laverne and Shirley (23906) **1.00** Entertainment UK (89722) **1.30** Taxi (22971) **2.00** Roseanne (31258) **2.30** Armstrong and Miller (43093) **3.00** Fraser (76258) **3.30** Alexei Sayle's Stuff (34345) **4.00** Close

THE SCI-FI CHANNEL

8.00pm Sightings (9061302) **9.00 FILM: Hangar 18** (1980) (42060760) **10.50** The Making of Spawn (6638031) **11.00** Friday the 13th (7525654) **12.00** Sightings (9798703) **1.00am** The Twilight Zone (2742426) **1.30** Tales of the Unexpected (7957161) **2.00** Dark Shadows (7780548) **2.30** New Alfred Hitchcock (7676155) **3.00** Friday the 13th (3279724) **4.00** Close

HOME & LEISURE

9.00am Simply Painting (6030708) **9.30** Garden Calendar (4380857) **10.00** Garden Club (1760031) **10.30** Room Service (6029892) **11.00** The House (2266944) **11.30** Graham Kerr (2267673) **12.00** Julia Child (6010944) **12.30pm** Hometime (4384673) **1.00** This Old House (5146988) **1.30** New Yankee Workshop (4383944) **2.00** Doing it Up (6478031) **2.30** Roadrunner (4085296) **3.00** Driving Passions (6497166) **3.30** Wheel Nuts (4080741)

DISCOVERY

4.00pm History's Turning Points (4009876) **4.30** Air Ambulance (4098760) **5.00** Next Step (6469383) **5.30** Jurassica 2 (4089012) **6.00** Wild Guide (4088925) **6.30** Wild Sanctuaries (4000505) **7.00** Invention (6489147) **7.30** History's Turning Points (4006789) **8.00** Supertrains! (1586302) **9.00** Flightline (2286708) **9.30** Ultra Science (4304437) **10.00** New Detectives (1576925) **11.00** The Professionals (9491

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London stages ultimate test of endurance

SPORT

CRICKET 50
Glamorgan take high hopes to Taunton



THURSDAY SEPTEMBER 18 1997

Prost's rejection adds to world champion's woes as Walkinshaw recruits Salo

Arrows leave Hill with few options

BY MICHAEL CALVIN

DAMON HILL endured a harrowing birthday yesterday when his calculated gamble on the cachet of a world championship began to unravel. Rejection by Alain Prost, in the aftermath of an announcement that Hill is to be replaced at Arrows by Mika Salo next season, threw the threat to his Formula One career into sharp focus.

Hill's only realistic option seems to be a move to Jordan, whose commercial director, Ian Phillips, stressed last night that an immediate deal was "unlikely". Their interest is in abeyance because they have until this evening to decide whether to appeal against a High Court ruling obliging them to return Giancarlo Fisichella, the outstanding young Italian driver, to Benetton.

"That is our priority," Phillips, who is likely to come under renewed pressure from Benson & Hedges, the team's principal sponsors, to recruit Hill, said. Jordan have had no formal contact with Hill's advisers this week, although they held informal talks in Spa, Belgium, a month ago.

Hill, 37 yesterday, was travelling to Zeltwig for the Austrian Grand Prix. It had been assumed that his future lay with Prost's eponymous team. A two-year deal, worth in the region of £10 million, had been discussed with Peugeot, the engine manufacturers, and Total, the fuel suppliers, but collapsed suddenly.

A curt statement issued by Prost read: "Following talks with Damon Hill the two parties have failed to come to a satisfactory agreement. Discussions have now come to a close." The unspoken accusation, that the Briton had priced himself out of a buyer's market, was obvious.

By contrast, the strains of Hill's departure from the Oxfordshire-based Arrows team were disguised by PR pieties. A statement issued by Tom Walkinshaw, the owner, stressed that it had "been invaluable to have the world champion driving for us", but his best wishes for the future had a distinctly hollow ring.

The feeling persists that Walkinshaw, an arch pragmatist, decided to get his retaliation in first once he realised that the £5 million required to retain Hill next season could be put to better use strengthening the technical infrastructure of his team. Salo has underlined his potential in an uncompetitive Tyrrell for three seasons. His services were also available at less than half of Hill's asking price.

Walkinshaw contacted Salo's management team at 6.30am yesterday from Paris, where he was stopping en route from a business trip to Japan at which he met representatives from Bridgestone, the tyre suppliers, and Yamaha, the engine manufacturers. Their agreement, for a three-year contract involving annual option clauses, was concluded by lunchtime.

Significantly, Walkinshaw insisted that discussions with sponsors had led to the realisation that "Mika would be the most appropriate driver for us". In the doublespeak that passes as contractual negotation, that means Hill's world title was regarded as excess baggage. The afterthought, that Pedro Diniz will help to form a "perfect partnership", was understandable, given that the Brazilian contributes £10 million to the Arrows budget in the form of personal sponsorship.

It is still difficult to believe that Hill, who has the patronage of Bernie Ecclestone, the sport's principal powerbroker, will be without a drive next season, but for someone whose popularity is based upon his humility and humanity, he has been done a grave disservice by the clumsy stewardship of his career. He has lost much of the sympathy generated by his summary dismissal from Williams last autumn.

Walkinshaw's motives in forcing the issue will be widely understood and supported. His strictures about the consistency of Hill's motivation, aired most publicly at the British Grand Prix in July, have not been entirely undermined by Hill's subsequent performances. Mechanical failure robbed him of victory in Hungary, but he was outqualified by Diniz in Belgium. His best chance now lies in Jordan accepting legal logic and selecting him as a partner of sufficient stature for Ralf Schumacher.

The only other leading driver on the market, after Jean Alesi's agreement with Sauber, is Gerhard Berger, who is expected to announce his retirement plans at his home grand prix this weekend. Someone of Hill's record and reputation should not be in the invidious position of seeking scraps, however lucrative the indignity.



Hill faces the prospect of being without a drive next season after a harrowing day yesterday. Photograph: Marc Aspland



Salo: promise



Walkinshaw: pragmatic

Brive must shrug off after-effects to play tie at Bath

BY DAVID HANDS
RUGBY CORRESPONDENT

BRIVE, the holders of the Heineken Cup, must play their match with Bath at the Recreation Ground on Saturday despite the injuries incurred by three leading players at the weekend. The tournament directors, meeting yesterday in Dublin, turned down the French club's request for a postponement in the wake of the bar-room brawl involving players and supporters from Pontypridd.

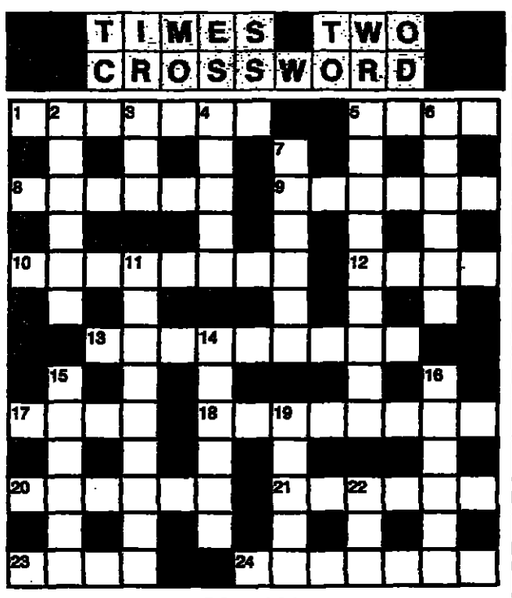
It will rub salt into Brive wounds if they are unable to field Christophe Lamaison, Philippe Carbonneau and David Venditti — all of them injured during the violent confrontation late on Sunday night — while Bath may give a debut on the wing to Ieuan Evans, who scored a try in a second-XV game against Gloucester on Tuesday.

The game is already a sell-out, but of greater concern to Brive is their return game with Pontypridd at Sardis Road on September 27. Lamaison, the France centre, has already said that he and his colleagues would find it difficult to play there, but Pontypridd officials claimed there would be no animosity. "If they come, we will be looking for a fair and good match," Eddie Jones, the team manager, said.

Dale McIntosh, the Pontypridd No 8, and Lionel Mallier, the Brive flanker, have already been suspended for a month after being sent off on Sunday. McIntosh was one of three players primarily implicated in the aftermath of his club's 32-31 defeat and it is the continuing judicial inquiry in France that will have lengthened the European Rugby Cup board's emergency meeting, called to examine the violence in Brive and the confrontational game the previous day between Pau and Llanelli.

Meanwhile, Pontypridd regrouped to prepare for their scheduled game with Scottish Borders in Kelso on Saturday evening. "We don't have any problem with playing Pontypridd," Rob Moffat, the Borders coach, said. "Rugby union has obviously suffered because of the publicity it has received after Sunday's scenes in Brive, but I am sure it will be a great night with some excellent entertainment."

TIMES TWO CROSSWORD



No 1202

ACROSS
1 Wordy (7)
5 Labyrinth (4)
8 Impenetrable forest: Kipling *Books* (6)
9 Worthless: petty (6)
10 Trying to avoid arrest (2,3,3)
12 Ship's platform, cleared for action (4)
13 Acropolis temple (9)
17 Relaxation: remainder (4)
18 Grappling fighter (5)
20 One-dimensional (6)
21 Romantic cave (6)
23 Focuser of light (4)
24 Unrefinedness (7)

DOWN
2 Of horses (6)
3 Computer error; insect (3)
4 Drive; bullock (5)
5 Clumsy (9)
6 Swiss financial centre (6)
7 Sea creature; Soapy — (*R S Surtees*) (6)
11 Cruel (9)
14 Frustrate (6)
15 Give exact meaning of (6)
16 Work for, group of, six (6)
19 Enigma composer (5)
22 Curious; unpaired (3)

SOLUTION TO NO 1201
ACROSS: 1 Algebra 5 Trod 9 Range 10 Rhombus 11 Kick upstairs 12 Goethe 13 Passed 16 Presbyterian 19 Intense 20 Abide 21 Silk 22 Kremlin
DOWN: 1 Aura 2 Genuine 3 Break the bank 4 Abrupt 6 Rabbi 7 Disused 8 Poet Laureate 12 Gypsies 14 Spaniel 15 Streak 17 Extol 18 Mean

The weekly Times Two Crossword Competition is suspended until further notice

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Gullit faces temptation to give youth its fling

BY BRIAN GLANVILLE

CHELSEA won the Cup Winners' Cup in Athens in 1971, beating mighty Real Madrid in a thrilling replay. They could now win it again.

No opposition as strong as Real is in evidence this season and the Italian Cup-holders, Vicenza, have just lost their most dangerous striker, Otero, the Uruguayan, with a serious injury. Certainly, Slovan Bratislava, Chelsea's opposition in the first-round, first-leg tie at Stamford Bridge tonight, are unlikely to stand in Chelsea's way. This Bratislava team is a far cry from the one that, a few years back, pushed Aston Villa so hard in the Uefa Cup. Money, or the lack of it, is at the root of their problems.

For example,they have lost two experienced goalkeepers, Vencel and Monar, in quick succession. Konig is far less convincing and may find this a daunting occasion.

Club managers have scant security in Slovakia. This game will be watched by Karol Pecze, an accomplished manager dismissed last season by Spartak Trnava when they were pipped on the post by FC Kosice — who have just sacked their manager — for the championship.

Pecze is expected imminently to take over from the two Bratislava incumbents, Bodnar and Moder, who have been holding the fort until now. So Pecze will probably be on the bench when Chelsea play the away leg.

Bratislava have a quick, lively attacking midfield player in Robert Tomaschek, who when he was managing Wolverhampton Wanderers, Milos Glonek, a powerful and experienced international centre back, has returned after playing in France for Caen. Up front, Stefan Maixner is his team's best hope of goals, but the truth is that Bratislava have been unable to buy.

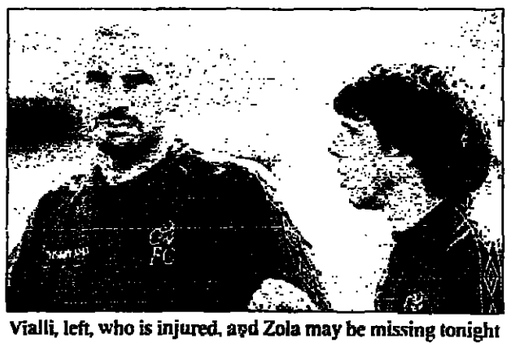
What a contrast with Chelsea, who have virtually assembled two full teams. Knowing that the Premiership match with Arsenal awaits on Sunday, Ruud Gullit, the manager, may be inclined to give youth its fling, as he did so successfully on Saturday against Crystal Palace.

This could mean further opportunities for Mark Nicholls, 20, and Paul Hughes, 21. There might even be a place in midfield for Jody Morris, who will not turn 19 until December. Up front, Gullit is spoilt for choice. Mark Hughes and Tore Andre Flo, of Norway, played against Palace. Flo could get another run, but it might be politic to rest the veteran Hughes. Gianluca Vialli has a thigh strain: Torino, coached by Graeme Souness, are said to have renewed their interest in him.

His two fellow Italy internationals, Roberto Di Matteo and Gianfranco Zola, who also missed the game at Palace, will be important against Arsenal. It will be surprising to see either given a full game tonight.

All in all, Chelsea's most serious problem could be overconfidence. An early goal might tempt them to sit back and see the game as won. In that respect, the use of young players eager to prove themselves would make sound sense. Of these, Danny Granville could return in place of the suspended Graeme Le Saux. Frank Sinclair is also suspended.

Bratislava have already knocked out Levski Sofia, drawing the first game, winning the second. Those who play for Chelsea against Bratislava and Arsenal will have fewer than three days to recover. Against that, Arsenal, who played on Tuesday, must recuperate from a long trip and a hard game and they do not have Chelsea's extravagant resources.



Vialli, left, who is injured, and Zola may be missing tonight

Fifa ranks England above Italy

BY RUSSELL KEMPSON

IT MIGHT count for little in the heat of Rome on October 11, when England and Italy meet in their deciding group two World Cup qualifying match, but England are now five places above Italy in the latest rankings of Fifa, football's world governing body.

Glenn Hoddle, the England coach, guided his side to a 4-0 victory against Moldova at Wembley last week, which was enough to retain seventh position in the rankings, with 60.70 points. However, Italy's 0-0 draw in Georgia, plus the recent improvement of Argentina and Norway, has seen Cesare Maldini's team slip to twelfth place, on 58.92 points.

Brazil, the world champions, are still first in the rankings, with Germany having moved up to second place. Romania, the only country with a 100 per cent record in the European qualifying series for the 1998 World Cup finals, are third.

On the same day as the group two gladiators meet in Rome, Scotland need to beat Latvia in group four to probably reach the finals in France as the best European runners-up. Craig Brown, the Scotland coach, will not be too perturbed to discover that his bravehearts have dropped one place, to 27th.

Ireland, after victories in Iceland and Lithuania, have climbed 13 places to 42nd. Northern Ireland have slipped one place to 72nd, but Wales are in freefall, down 18 places this year to 98th.

WORLD RANKINGS: 1 Brazil 72.34pts, 2, Germany 63.36, 3 Romania 62.65, 4, Holland 62.06, 5, Denmark 61.60 6 Spain 61.15, 7 England 60.70, 8, Norway 60.51; 9, Colombia 60.05, 10 Argentina 59.13 Other: 27, Scotland 54.10, 42, Ireland 48.35 72, N Ireland 38.43 98, Wales 30.73

